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TEACHERS AS PARTICIPATORS IN SCHOOL PLANNING AND SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

BY

LILA VER PLANCK NORTH, SPECIAL INVESTIGATOR

BUREAU OF RESEARCH

WOMEN'S EDUCATIONAL AND INDUSTRIAL UNION

BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS



PREPARED FOR AND PUBLISHED BY

SCHOOL-VOTERS' LEAGUE

BOSTON, MASS.

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THE SCHOOL-VOTERS' LEAGUE

which has for a number of years been interested in the welfare of the public schools and especially in the effort to draw into closer sympathy and coöperation the teachers, parents and administrative staff of the schools, takes pleasure in presenting to its friends this study of one of the most vital questions that is attracting the attention of educators at the present time.

September 30, 1915.

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TEACHERS AS PARTICIPATORS IN SCHOOL PLANNING AND SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

INTRODUCTION

There seems little chance that the terms used in the heading of this informal discussion will not be clearly understood. Yet, since it is hoped readers will be found who differ widely in their fields of experience and are therefore likely to attach different meanings even to simple words, it may be safe to state the sense in which each term of the title will be used.

First, the "teacher," from the pupils' point of view, indicates the person who presides over the classroom, whether in the elementary grade or the high school department. In the children's judgment the school principal is not a teacher, even though he may, as is frequently the case in smaller communities, have a class or two himself. Yet because he must have been at some time a class teacher and is still directly identified with the work of teaching through all the school day, we include in the term "teacher" the principal, too. We take in also the instructors in the special branches, as music, manual training, physical training, and since the supervisors of these special branches must be practical teachers, we include them. We leave out the medical inspectors, school nurses, playground directors, school attendance officers, etc. In fact, we take the viewpoint of the School Board or Committee, and under the word "teacher" include all persons actually engaged in the work of instruction.

Next, as to "school planning." There is planning of all varieties connected with the daily school business; a fact which occasions anguish and perplexity to the unequipped teacher. But we do not here refer to the details of procedure appertaining to the classroom work, or even to the schedule of times and activi-

ties worked out by principals for the conduct of affairs in their own buildings. We *do* mean by "school planning" the formation of policies which shall have general application to the schools, or to classes of pupils, and are intended for incorporation as authorized school procedure.

"Administration" when used of public school systems as of political, has several cognate meanings. It is used of the legal authorities and their official representatives through whom the school laws are executed; it is used, too, of the methods devised to insure the operation of those laws. A third meaning is commonly, though perhaps not quite properly, attached to the word "administration," indicating such legislative action by school authorities as is permissible to them under the law of the State. Let us take "administration" in its wider sense and include the body of school officials, the school regulations they formulate, and the methods devised to insure the application of these regulations.

"Participators" conveys a meaning both comprehensive and elusive. We hope in the succeeding pages to make clearer its use in relation to school affairs, but for the present it may be understood to indicate those who have a share, and more especially a responsible share, in the making of school regulations.

With the terms clearly understood we take up the discussion of the topic as a whole.

CHAPTER I

COMMON OPINIONS ON THE TEACHERS' SHARE IN SCHOOL MANAGEMENT

Outside of the academic circles those holding firmest conviction on this subject are the school children. In the early years of the elementary course the small learner becomes familiar with a personality behind a desk; a supreme ruler over subjects to whom are presented such tasks and upon whom are imposed such conditions as seem to her good. Such is the teacher to the fostering of a democratic government. True, there is the principal; he, however, is simply a dread exactor of penalties, or in rarer cases a court of appeals visited by perplexed or enraged parents. Neither parents nor principal, however, have a power comparable to that of the "teacher." It is she who really decides everything.

As the child mounts higher in the grades, he understands that the teacher's responsibility for classroom tasks and conditions is shared by the principal. Still he remains convinced that in the matters that most directly affect his school life, choice and decision lie with the teacher. Pupils in the high schools are less convinced of their teachers' power of independent action or decision, since the domination of higher authorities, especially the Procrustean measurements of the colleges, are freely discussed in their hearing. Taken as a whole, nevertheless, pupils of all grades conceive their teachers to have responsibility in the selection of studies, methods and regulations.

Among parents opinions depend on intelligence and on the opportunity for that social intercourse with teachers whereby their views and status are learned. But even among the educated parents and their associates, especially in a large city, there is a prevalent haziness as to the teacher's part in the school planning, even in regard to the subject of paramount interest, namely, what is being studied and how long it will take to get through

with it. If the teacher does not choose the pabulum, the parents feel that she at least apportions the daily amount.

A test of the ordinary knowledge of school management was recently made in a certain city. Six married couples of the educated and well-to-do class were selected, and in each case to husband and wife severally was put the simple question, "Who decides what shall be studied in the public schools?"

The results of the query illustrate the inexact or erroneous opinions of the "intelligent classes." Of the six couples chosen all were in early married life except Mr. and Mrs. A, who had a son and a daughter married and young grandchildren, some of whom were in the schools. Mr. and Mrs. A had lived all their married life in the city selected. Mr. A was not quite certain how the studies were chosen at present, but thought the superintendent used to do it. Mrs. A did not really know, and had "often wondered, as they put in such queer things."

The other five couples were of what is termed the highly educated class. All the men had completed the high school course, three had been graduated from colleges in good standing. Four of the women were college alumnae; one had been a teacher in the elementary grades. No one of the women would venture a decided answer to the query; two said they would ask their husbands. One thought the teacher had a great deal to do with it, but that if she wanted to leave out a subject or put in anything new, she would consult the President of the Board of Education. The men, all voters, all in executive business positions, were equally uncertain, with one exception. That one man, out of the twelve persons questioned, was perfectly informed on the subject, knew the state law, the powers of the School Board, and of the Superintendent. As to the teachers, he claimed they had no power of decision at all.

What is the opinion of the teachers themselves as to their participation in school planning? It is their contention that not only do they teach what is prescribed from above, but must teach it as the prescriptions specify. Vigorous assertion is made, especially in the larger cities, that even as regards class management the code to which teachers must pledge allegiance is mainly made up of "thou shalt nots." There is no question that the voice of the

teaching bodies in the majority of strictly organized school systems is in accord as to the limitations of their initiative and influence in school decisions. They claim that the higher powers undervalue their proved experience and are indifferent to their ability to deal with problems demanding knowledge of child life and capacity. "The qualities of faithfulness, industry, knowledge, skill and experience which meet with swift and sure rewards in business are ignored in the schools."

"There is not," said a principal in a growing city of the East, "a single contented or enthusiastic teacher in this school system. We have no voice in school affairs." The present method of school management is described as "a feudal system that destroys educational vitality at its source," and "crushes all initiative by an octopus-like authority," and in a still larger city a prominent principal declared, "Our superintendent is a Czar. He does not want the opinions of his teachers."

We are not here considering the grounds of these opinions or their value or justification; we are simply finding the teachers' views on the matter. Some teachers have none, but where they do have them there is pretty general agreement that the teaching force has no adequate share in determining school problems and that the schools suffer from the fact.

The opinions of supervisory or administrative school officers as to the share of teachers in school government is largely influenced by their own subjective attitude. Where the Board of Education or the Superintendent or both regard the advice of the teaching force as desirable or essential, they will claim that they seek and obtain that advice. In an informal or accidental way they frequently do. More often intention is mistaken for performance. Where authorities, on the other hand, view the so-called interference of teachers with suspicion or hostility, they claim that the "system" offers teachers every suitable opportunity of self-expression through the principal or assistant superintendent. Yet it is natural, perhaps inevitable, that these officers should reflect the administrative attitude and in that case they themselves set no value on the teachers' judgments.

Each of these points of view presents a partial view of the situation. We shall get nearer to true conditions by quoting briefly

the actual facts of law and practice so far as they have been obtainable.

I. THE TRUE SITUATION AS TO THE TEACHERS' SHARE IN SCHOOL GOVERNMENT.

“Classroom teachers are the only persons in the world who have most of the knowledge necessary for making curricula that will fit. What provision is there in the mandatory minimum curriculum for bringing this knowledge into use?”¹

It is evident from the rhetorical question of this well-known educator that so far as the formulation of the school course is concerned, no formal enactment of the State secures the teachers' aid. Who does then really decide what shall be taught, and who calculates the amount which must be learned in a month or a year? Certainly the classroom teacher does not, as she, and more rarely he, affirms with that air of protesting resignation common among employees perpetually impressed with the unreason of constituted authorities. The parents should all know—(but many of them, as we have seen, do not); teachers are supposed to know—(but many of *them* do not) that so far as the minimum requirements are concerned, local authorities have no power of decision as to what shall be taught. The authority for the course of study is now almost universally vested in the State. In fact 44 States now issue and apply to their schools a state syllabus, while 24 make the use of this syllabus mandatory. Massachusetts, the first State to establish a State Board of Education, has been among the latest to issue a state syllabus. In the course of study as issued by Massachusetts there are certain subjects which *must* be taught in the schools with an additional list of those which may be; the latter for the most part subjects included in the curriculum of the secondary schools. This is in accordance with the principle which maintains the “adoption of a uniform minimum course in which only the essentials of fundamental education shall be included, with sufficient flexibility to meet local conditions and permitting local authorities to include additional instruction.”

¹ Frank McMurry, in Report of National Education Association Conference, 1912.

There are here two openings for the employment of the classroom teachers' judgment. First, in deciding upon the fundamental essentials of education for the whole State; second, in choosing for any particular locality the suitable additional subjects of instruction. Examination of state laws relating to education has discovered no definite provision for consultation of teachers in forming the curriculum. The study of the rules and regulations of many city systems yields the same results.

As with the course of study, so with other matters of school government, such as the fixing of hours and days of school attendance, the conditions of promotion, the schedule of teachers' salaries, their promotion, transfer or tenure. Responsibility for these latter matters lies as a rule with local authority, sometimes in the person of the School Board, sometimes with the Superintendent, never with the teacher in active service.

But how did this authority come into the hands of those who now exercise it? To trace the evolution of our present city school systems is beyond the scope of this essay. It has been ably done by those who treat the subject of school administration from the historic standpoint. One fact is made clear from their discussion, namely, that certain important school questions now decided by centralized authority were in an earlier period dealt with by the teaching force itself or through their recommendations automatically approved by the School Committee. The resulting diversities in quality and practice of school government gave rise to state regulation and superintendence and to the tidal wave of centralized administration by which the teachers' individual judgment has been submerged at present. In many large cities the teaching force from the principal down, or perhaps up, to the kindergartner, plays a part in the school system comparable to that of the intelligent factory hand, who is required to be familiar with the workings of a complicated machine, but whose true business it is, with a trained dexterity, to feed it the material it is planned to manipulate.

The statement of the last paragraph will probably receive categorical denial from school authorities; it will be questioned, with reservations, by teachers of high position conscious of considerable influence with the Superintendent or School Board. By

the rank and file, however, of the city teachers of whatever grade it will be sustained. Nothing is more common and, one must add, more disheartening in discussion with school teachers than the disclaiming of all responsibility for the general conditions under which their work is done;—nothing, that is, unless it be the pronounced discontent with particular regulations or requirements.

This discontent with the status quo is finding expression in methods that increase daily in variety and in influence through the multiplication and the aims of voluntary teachers' organizations, through the pages of teachers' publications, through united petitions to boards of education, or to state legislatures. Nor is this desire for the admission of teachers to a recognized place in school administration confined to the teaching force; it is found among almost all advanced professors of education, and has taken actual shape in certain new movements in the schools. The conditions described above are not in fact at the present time universal; there are signs that they are on the way to become exceptional. What these signs are will now be discussed.

CHAPTER II

METHODS BY WHICH TEACHERS ASSIST IN FORMING SCHOOL PLANS

“Successful supervisory officers are learning that it is advantageous, in so far as it is possible, to secure the participation of teachers in the development of supervisory and administrative policies.”

Professor Strayer, of the New York Teachers' College, makes this statement in his Report of the Survey of the School System of Butte, Montana. The eager inquirer, hoping to obtain definite information as to the local habitation of these “successful supervisory officers,” arranges for a personal interview with the professor to find that he endorses the opinions expressed above, but that he cannot mention, with the exception of New York and Chicago, particular cities where the conditions he approves are formally established. Other inquiries made during personal interviews with educators or professors of educational administration give much the same result. There is an impression that “movements” leading to teacher-participation in school planning are contemplated or in existence, but knowledge of the movements themselves or of the channels through which they may be discovered is scanty indeed. Results little more satisfactory reward examination of the prominent educational journals or the publications of the United States Bureau of Education. The reports of the annual meetings of the National Education Association contain, amid the numerous topics treated by educational experts, not a single instance of the discussion as a separate theme of the part teachers may or do play in school planning. Diligent perusal does indeed discover scattered references to the fact that the teachers' knowledge and ability are not utilized as a rule by those who deal with administrative problems, but in searching for quoted examples of such

utilization one crushes tons of ore to find a few ounces of gold. Yet the scanty references and the still more infrequent exemplifications of the teaching force as participators in the school councils indicate a slow shifting in the administrative point of view. A few years ago the most elaborate treatises on school administration, though devoting pages in plenty to the training, duties and selection of teachers, omitted to suggest their possible utility as advisers. The most recent books of the kind do, however, comment, briefly though it be, on the wisdom of employing the teachers' aid in forming as well as executing school policies. Educators, both of the theoretical and practical classes are, in fact, awakening to a realization that the modern centralization of school control, modern unification of both content and method in the school course, have obscured the value of the individual teacher's experience and judgment, while magnifying that of the expert supervisor or chief. We quote in this connection from a Boston writer of eminent experience:

“Perhaps there is no greater waste in the working of the present public school system than that of the intellectual force and enthusiasm of good teachers. Whatever their professional training, whatever their zeal, whatever their knowledge gained by years of experience with children, they must still teach in practically stereotyped ways, what is laid down to be taught in each particular grade. . . . A teacher's life must be spent in trying to mold a heterogenous collection of pupils into one pattern in time to send them along to the next teacher, who in turn must repeat the process. If any teacher maddened by such a wrong, impossible task, rebels, she is likely to be supplanted; if she expresses dissent to the Superintendent or the rare committeeman she is viewed with suspicion as a faddist; if she confides her woes to her fellow teachers they usually counsel her to prudent acquiescence in the things that be. As a consequence, the process of teaching in the public schools, instead of making a woman wiser and broader and more influential, tends to harden her, along with her poor pupils, into a narrower and narrower outline. There should be, therefore, a school faculty, similar to a college faculty, wherein courses of study,

methods of teaching, textbooks, and the thousand questions of pedagogics should have free discussion; wherein every new idea should have encouragement; wherein all fair criticism of books and methods should have respectful hearing."¹

The frank and terse utterances just quoted set forth opinions not often seen in print; but perchance not singular for all that. It is not possible, we believe, that a school council can closely resemble a college faculty, either in make-up or in function, but that is not the main point. The central idea is that teachers should be utilized as consultants and advisers in school policies. It is not a new idea, but for a time it has been considered worn out. That it is now reviving there is no question, but the forms in which the movement manifests itself are various and distinct and should be separately considered. We take up the more usual and prominent.

I. INFORMAL CONSULTATION WITH TEACHERS BY SCHOOL AUTHORITIES.

This method of using the teachers' experience is rather a survival than a revival. In small communities it has always been practiced, and even now it is not uncommon in the larger cities where it is usually known that certain teachers have the ear of the School Board or of the Superintendent. Such confidential exchanges sometimes work benefit to condition in the schools, more often they are detrimental to their permanent interests, since nothing incites the hydra-headed monster to activity more certainly than the conviction of favoritism shown to a teacher or a group of teachers. The modern superintendent is so painfully aware of this that he frequently denies himself valued aid from teachers because he knows that by consulting them he will rouse jealousies and antagonisms. This is so universally the situation that caution and reserve have marked the superintendent for their own. It is only in the smaller and not yet completely stereotyped school systems that free man-to-man consultation upon school matters takes place between teachers and officials. Nor does it always take place there.

¹ J. P. Munroe, *The Educational Ideal*.

II. REGULAR OR OCCASIONAL FORMAL MEETINGS WITH TEACHERS.

These, also, are more frequently in towns and smaller cities. Rightly managed they are productive of mutual understanding between working and supervisory forces, and shed needed light on the dark places of school management. They may be found among all species of school units. A principal, for example, may call his grade teachers together for conference on special occasions, or at stated times. Regular meetings with the teachers are found to be far more frequent in high than in elementary schools, where the practice varies greatly. A Boston elementary school principal asserts he has "no more conferences than are absolutely necessary," while a Newark elementary principal gets his teachers together every fortnight.

Not only does the frequency but the character of the ordinary "teachers' meeting" vary. Sometimes the principal tries to make these meetings "improving" to the teachers. One principal met his teachers at regular times after school hours and read to them portions of an educational work which they were then asked to discuss. "They did not seem interested and it was given up," reported the superintendent in that city in a tone of discouragement. It was evident that he (and he was a charitable man, too!) had but a low opinion of those teachers' attitude toward professional advancement.

The principal of a noted New Jersey high school, on the other hand, has a weekly conference with his teachers in which any one may advance a topic related to school conduct or policy. There is no lack of interest in these meetings. This principal and corps of teachers are pulling together in splendid team work. The superintendent in a town with a number of large elementary schools meets his teachers at stated times for mutual discussion of educational problems and school policy. His teachers are full of buoyant energy. Not ten miles from this cheerful school system is one in which the general body of teachers is uneasy and depressed, the principal of the flourishing high school the most depressed of all. This is the more singular, since from this town have gone forth to larger fields two superintendents in succession whose incumbency has been marked by a power and

originality productive of high reputation. The gloom settled down upon the arrival of a superintendent who tells his teachers what they must do and has no further relations with them.

In the large city school systems there is little opportunity in the ordinary teachers' meeting for expression of judgment or opinion on the broader school questions. There is another side to this, as principals and superintendents very well know. In the most cheerful school system and in the most lively open-to-all conference teachers are often unresponsive to invitations to express their views. They have a settled conviction that these views will have little or no influence upon the discussions of the central office where final decision is made. Teachers are frequently astray in this conviction; their suggestions are in reality seldom regarded with the indifference they resent, nor is official proceeding invariably of the rigid character they suppose. But it is difficult to convince them of this when so-called "conferences" are assemblies in which the conspicuous voice is that of the presiding principal or superintendent, and the utterances of that voice are in the way of instruction or admonition only. Weariness, disdain, indifference, or downright cowardice lock the teachers' tongues until, the ordeal over, amid groups of their own kind or in the ear of personal friends they pour forth their real opinions with untutored eloquence.

The ordinary teachers' meeting in large cities, then, is, on the whole, an unsatisfactory medium for the expression of the teachers' views and judgments. Even where it is so conducted as to elicit these views, there is seldom an attempt to embody a general consensus of opinion or some approved individual suggestion in a form that may carry weight with the school officials.

III. TEMPORARY CONFERENCES OF COMMITTEES OF TEACHERS FORMED FOR A SPECIAL PURPOSE.

Within the last decade there have been in school circles universal stir and debate in regard to the value of the content and customary partition of the accepted courses of study, especially as laid down for the elementary schools. The large proportion of retarded pupils, the appalling dropping out after the fifth or

sixth grades, the dismal failures of first year high school pupils, the loud complaints of employers, disgusted by the illiteracy and incapableness of young wage-earners, have all created growing doubt as to the practical fitness of the school work children are compelled by law to undertake. Throughout the length and breadth of the land revisions of the course of study are in progress. Nor are these revisions left entirely to the educational experts, or to the administration's Committee on Courses of Study, if such there be. It is discovered that the classroom teacher alone knows whatever there is to know about the reactions of the child under the application of the prescribed educational dose. Wherefore in many different cities committees or conferences of teachers have been called in consultation on the modification of the curriculum, and have worked diligently for weeks or months in the attempt to extricate the schools from this dilemma. Consciousness that their trained experience had found at last its opportunity has given the teachers at once exhilaration and dignity.

The disposition made of the recommendations or reports resultant from these conferences is somewhat uncertain. Usually their work is incorporated with that of school officials or committees. An example in point is the method used in a recent revision of the course of study in the schools of Newark, New Jersey. The report of the Board of Education states: "The revision of the course of study has been prepared chiefly by the City Superintendent and his assistants. It embodies suggestions made by Committees of the Principals' Association, and by the Grammar Vice-Principals' Association, and by a number of individual teachers."

Or the conclusions of the teachers may take the form of a separate formal report which passes into the hands of the central school authorities, occasionally to reappear as a printed bulletin or syllabus. More frequently it is laid on the table or possibly under it, since it disappears from view—it may be for years or it may be forever. In any case, diligent examination of the rules and regulations of the school boards of our larger cities, reveals no definite provision for consultation with teachers on the school curriculum, or for formal recognition of their recom-

mendations in regard to it. It is, however, taken for granted that teachers may be called upon to render extra service in this connection, but not that the service shall be acknowledged or used by the higher authorities.

Teachers whose requested recommendations on school curriculum or management though prepared at cost of much labor have thus sunk into oblivion, will not readily respond to a second call for such service. We are all thus constituted; the experience of a fruitless labor is a most effective anesthetic for energy.

IV. PERMANENT TEACHER COUNCILS OFFICIALLY CONSTITUTED.

Certain school officials have slowly but surely come to the realization of the "waste of the intellectual force of the teachers" and have, by the organization of permanent councils or conferences, made it possible to use their teachers' experience. The examples of this movement are few, scattered and, from want of authoritative material, exceedingly difficult to present in clear description. Such examples as it has been possible to find are of several different types as to inception, purpose and character.

1. TEACHERS' COUNCILS ORGANIZED ON THE INITIATIVE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS, BUT WITH NO LEGAL STATUS.

a. The Round Table Committee of Los Angeles.

We cross the continent, as is not uncommon, to find the earliest example of a progressive movement in public administration. Superintendent Francis of Los Angeles believes his Round Table to be the first permanent organization with teacher-participation in view. The membership of the Round Table consists of representatives *elected* from the voluntary teachers' clubs, which, as is customary, are formed on grade or occupational lines; as the "Teachers' Club," "Principals' Club," etc. Kindergartners, "primary" and "grammar" school teachers, the intermediate and high school teachers, and the supervisors of special branches form the representation, which is proportional to the numbers in each class of teachers. The superintendent appoints three members at large. "Meetings," writes the superintendent

ent, "discuss questions of general interest, such as salaries, books, teaching methods, special activities, etc."

More detailed information in regard to this Round Table is desirable. We do not know whether these discussions result in formal reports or recommendations brought before the Board of Education, whether the superintendent presides, whether there is committee work, how often the Round Table meets, etc. We do know that the committee has no legal status and that with the death or removal of the superintendent, the Los Angeles school teachers might figuratively suffer from loss of voice.

b. The vain attempt in Portland, Oregon.

From the more northerly shores of the Pacific came a rumor that the Superintendent of Schools in Portland, Oregon, stimulated by the example of Los Angeles, proposed to establish a teachers' council. He was written to for information and replied as follows: "Last year I thought of appointing an advisory council of principals and teachers, but owing to lack of harmony among the various teachers' organizations, it was thought best not to do so at that time. Since then nothing has been done in the matter."

This is very sad, but not so sad as the next.

c. The legally instituted council in Dallas, Texas, and its fate.

Superintendent Lefevre of Dallas, after consultation with leading teachers, recommended to the Board of Education in 1906 a plan for the organization of a teachers' council. The Board approved, and a representative council was organized, making its reports directly to the Board. Instead of bringing about a greater degree of coöperation, the council deliberations divided rather than united the teachers and their superintendent. The superintendent resigned and the irritated Board of Education dissolved the council. The present superintendent is quoted as saying: "We have no earthly use for such an institution. It was the source of more political broils, more prejudices and disputes, and more political activity on the part of teachers than anything ever instituted before in our schools. Certain teachers who were candidates for membership in the council were so politically active that they had campaign managers who as-

sisted in pulling the wires, soliciting votes among the teachers and thus securing their election. This one thing got the teachers and the schools into trouble it will take ten years to eradicate."

"The Dallas council," thinks a prominent New England superintendent, "was organized on a wrong basis." Yet it was practically the same basis, as will be shown later, as that of a more important council so far successful.

d. The Council of New Britain, Connecticut, the solitary example of its kind in New England.

The superintendent of the New Britain schools, Dr. Holmes, has furnished full information on the New Britain council, which is now in 1915 entering upon its fifth year of service. "This organization," he writes, "which is the natural development of the principle underlying the management of the New Britain schools, is almost unique among professional organizations, one of its chief purposes being to furnish to all factors of the teaching body an opportunity to confer together for the highest efficiency of the schools."

The New Britain School Council has a constitution and by-laws, both short, clear and simple. As defined in the constitution its purposes are:

1. To secure a more active and effective participation of the teachers in the professional direction of the schools.
2. To afford the largest possible opportunity for initiative on the part of the teachers.
3. To encourage professional improvement through study and discussion of important problems of education and school management.
4. To develop the sense of solidarity of the teaching body and an increasing appreciation of community of interest and responsibility among teachers of all grades.
5. To furnish the teaching body a ready and effective means for the expression of its sentiments or opinions with reference to questions of school policy.

The by-laws provide: That the members of the Council shall be:

1. All principals, *ex-officio*.
2. All supervisory officers and special teachers, *ex-officio*.
3. One representative from each elementary grade, including kindergarten, to be elected by members of the grade.
4. Four representatives from the high school to be elected by the teachers of the high school, one for each of the four years of the course, if possible.

The officers are a President, Vice-President and Secretary, elected by ballot by the members on the last meeting of the school year. These officers constitute a Program Committee to propose and arrange lines of work and investigation, subject to the approval of the council.

The regular meetings of the council are at 8 P. M., on the first Tuesday of each month of the school year.

It is also provided that there shall be meetings of all the teachers in each elementary grade on the last Monday in November, January, February, March and April, and such other dates as the grade teachers may determine. At the April meeting the teachers of each grade elect by ballot a representative to serve for one year in the council. The council further has power to appoint from time to time committees for special investigation and report. It has, however, no standing committees other than the program committee.

The New Britain Council since its inception has kept its special function in mind: "It works sometimes through conference, sometimes through committees, but comes back always in the summarizing of results to practical recommendations for the New Britain schools." The schools include the child population of a manufacturing city with the usual large proportion of children of foreign birth or parentage. To mold them into effective citizenship is the united purpose of the superintendent, the supervisory officers and the 240 teachers.

For 1913-14 the Program Committee arranged a series of studies on the Psychological Bases of Teaching, a subject which has an academic flavor, but which as worked out proved not only eminently informing and practical, but opened the way for valuable contributions from the teachers' individual or united ex-

perience. Among the sub-topics are: Artificial and natural interest, development of habit from instinct, practical application to the schools of New Britain. The next fall the subject was developed along different lines, as: Causes of non-promotion, losses from school, nativity, parentage, language of pupils.

The study of the present year includes: The individual child in school (among its sub-divisions are, How far is the usual course of study and school organization responsible for unsatisfactory progress? How can the schools better know their children, and how turn their genuine outside interest to account?), and Records,—the kind that help the pupil.

The Council of New Britain was the Superintendent's idea, and since its beginning he has been a working member. He writes: "I have found it a great help in the administration of the schools. It has never failed."

It is one of the anomalies of the school situation in these United States that this valuable and successful organization has so far no legal recognition from the School Board of New Britain. We can simply conjecture on the declarations of other school authorities, that the Board concedes the advantage of the council under the wise guidance of the present Superintendent but scents possible danger under some other conditions.

e. Boston Official Associations and Councils.

Among the studies issued as Bulletins by the United States Bureau of Education is one published in 1911 entitled "Agencies for the Improvement of Teachers in Service."¹ The author devotes two or three final pages to the subject of the participation of teachers in the determination of educational policies, and in introducing the topic writes, "There appears to be at this time but one city in the United States where a beginning has been made at giving the teachers official and constitutional right to participate in determining the educational policies under which they are working. This city is Dallas, Texas." The writer proceeds to give an account of the establishment of the teachers' council of Dallas by the Board of Education, at the proposal of

¹ W. C. Ruediger, Professor of Educational Psychology in The George Washington University.

Superintendent Lefevre. The subsequent disastrous history of the movement was not known, of course, in 1911.

Professor Ruediger then speaks of the privileges of making suggestions in educational matters extended to teachers, in which connection he states:

“This administrative method of allowing the teachers a voice has been most fully organized and established in Boston. There the teachers are allowed not only to take part in making the course of study, but also in determining other educational policies.”

The reference above is to a plan supposed to be already in operation, and it is evidently the conviction of the author that it has succeeded in meeting the aims expressed in the Boston School Report of 1909, issued by Superintendent Stratton D. Brooks, from which we quote the following:

“Granted that the schools of the same system should have reasonable uniformity in aims, purposes and policies, the most important problem of school administration is what these policies should be and who shall determine them. One grave defect in the American Education is the lack of any *institutional* method for the participation of teachers in the determination of major educational policies. A detrimental effect of an autocratic system is the development in the teaching force of a lack of responsibility for major things and also the growth of a feeling of waiting for orders, rather than a feeling of intelligent participation in the larger elements of educational work. What is needed is an organization that provides for the fullest consideration of educational policies by teachers, by principals and by the supervisory force, wherein every major problem may be discussed with the fullest harmony and with most complete information as to its bearings upon the interests of pupils, of the teachers and of the community. Such an organization should have official recognition and become a permanent institution.”¹

This large plan had *not* been carried out in the period covered by this report, but what was held to be a beginning had been made at the top of the school ladder, namely in the high schools.

¹ Report of the Boston School Committee, 1909.

The Boston High School Councils.

As is well known, the Boston Secondary schools have a long history and by consequence many peculiarities of character and development, partly indicated by their titles, as here given.

BOSTON NORMAL, LATIN, AND HIGH SCHOOLS

Normal School	English High School
Public Latin School	Girls' High School
Girls' Latin School	High School of Commerce
Mechanic Arts High School	High School of Practical Arts

In addition there are eight high schools of the usual type in outlying sections of greater Boston, some of them boasting distinguished names in the long lists of former head masters.

Among these 16 secondary schools had arisen much diversity of view on scholastic and administrative matters with some consequent waste of effectiveness. With the purpose of unifying aims and gaining agreement as to methods through the teachers' own deliberations there were formed in March, 1907, eight High School Councils, each representing a department of instruction. The members of the Councils are the Heads of Departments, who, in Boston, if men, are termed Masters; if women, First Assistants. The responsibilities of these positions are identical, but the difference in name and sex means large difference in salary in favor of the men. The appointments are made by the City Superintendent. Each Council consists therefore, of from ten to sixteen members, the number depending on the arrangement in the different schools as to the number of teachers ranked as Heads of Departments. The Science Council, for instance, has fifteen members, of which two are women; the English Council fourteen members, nine men and five women. The Councils meet on one afternoon of each month; their discussions are confined strictly to professional questions, which may be sent to them by the Board of Superintendents or proposed by their own membership. Standing committees on textbooks, programs, etc., are usual. There is no joint meeting of representatives from all the Councils to discuss matters of common interest. Reports of each

meeting are sent first to the City Superintendent, and by him to the Association of Head Masters, as the principals of high schools are termed, and by them turned over to the disposition of the Board of Superintendents. Matters discussed by Councils may or may not be made known to the assistant instructors in the several departments, who therefore have no *recognized* interest before or after in the deliberation. Questions relating to the general policy of the high school or of the schools in general are not discussed. Recommendations as to courses of study in special subjects have been at times presented to the School Committee by certain councils, and sometimes they have been adopted and sometimes they have not.

It is difficult to see in this arrangement even the beginning of the development of that plan for the "discussion of major policies as bearing upon the interests of the community." Dissatisfaction with the present status of the Councils is sometimes found among the several hundred high school teachers ranking as masters, assistants, instructors, and assistant instructors, who complain that there is no regular method by which those not in the Councils may represent their views on department affairs or learn the consensus of opinion on matters discussed in the Councils.

The utility of these Councils is dubious. There is undeniable value in the discussion by heads of departments of common academic problems, but such discussion is already practiced in the voluntary clubs made up of high school teachers, as the High School Masters' Club of men and the High School Assistants' Club of women. Altogether the primary design of these organizations, if in truth it were to provide a means for the expression of views on the "larger policies," has been entirely lost sight of. The special interests of the high schools, already sufficiently absorbing to their faculties, are brought into greater prominence by the existence of the Council's prominence.

The Boston High School Councils are quoted even in so recent a publication as Dr. Van Sickles' "Progress in City School Systems" as an instance of teacher-participation in school planning. It will be seen that they are so in the most limited sense and that their real influence upon the decisions of the administration

is negligible. However, their purpose, if not their practice, gives them a place in this section.¹

The Boston Masters' Association.

The secretary of this association believes it was formally though not officially organized about 1878 but that prior to that date informal meetings were held regularly. It originated as a voluntary association to "discuss practical educational questions and to improve educational practice by an exchange of views." It has had for sometime, however, an official status, and is, as stated in the Report of the Boston School Committee, "the official meeting of all principals for the purpose of discussing topics of common interest and receiving announcements from the Superintendent." Each principal is expected to attend or to send a representative to the regular meeting held each month of the school term. A social meeting preceded by a dinner is held four times a year. There are no regular dues, but a special tax is levied from time to time as needed. The present membership numbers 94.

A list of the "topics of common interest" discussed for the year 1913-14 is as follows:

TOPICS DISCUSSED IN BOSTON MASTERS' ASSOCIATION, 1913-14

<i>Month</i>	<i>Topic</i>	<i>Speaker</i>
October	The Work of the Year. Courtis Tests in Arithmetic.	The City Superintendent. An Assistant Superintendent.
November	The Teaching of Arithmetic.	The Principal of an Elementary School. A Master in the Normal School.

¹ These Councils were established under a previous administration of the schools, and the feeling found among many teachers that their influence with the administration is very little and their value doubtful, results to a large extent from conditions existing at an earlier date.

Since the present superintendent took charge of the schools there has been evidence that increased weight is given to the recommendations of the Councils.

<i>Month</i>	<i>Topic</i>	<i>Speaker</i>
December	Form and Substance in Composition.	An Assistant Principal in an Elementary School (a woman). A First Assistant in the Latin School (a woman).
January	Arithmetic once more.	An Assistant Superintendent. The Master of an Elementary School (a woman). The Master in Normal School.
February	English Composition.	Master in Mechanic Arts High School. A Principal of an Elementary School. A Principal of an Elementary School.
March	Some Addresses at the Superintendents' Meeting at Richmond.	Reports by five Assistant Superintendents.
April	Summer Review Schools. Relations of Vocational and Liberal Education.	An Assistant Superintendent. State Commissioner of Education.
May	Measurements of Efficiency.	A Harvard Professor of Education.
June	Business Matters. Promotion of Submasters. Memorial Services.	The City Superintendent. A Special Committee.

Two characteristics of these discussions by the assembled directing force of the Boston schools are prominent: First, the topics discussed in five of the nine meetings concerned technicalities in the course of study; in the three spring meetings subjects

of broader interest were introduced. In no case was any general policy discussed or any consensus of opinion on school management asked or offered. Discussions were not intended, as in New Britain, to lead directly to a "summary of recommendations for the schools."

Again, discussion was largely dominated by the superintending force. Omitting the special business meetings in June, there were in eight meetings twenty-one speakers on the various topics and sub-topics. Of these two were invited from outside, nine were principals or teachers and ten members of the Board of Superintendents.

Excepting as thus imperfectly represented in the Masters' Association, there has been instituted for the Elementary School Teachers of Boston no form of participation in school planning. That Boston school authorities have at some time recognized and deplored that fact is proven by a further quotation from the Report of 1909, with which we conclude this view of the Boston situation.

"For the elementary schools the problem of the permanent organization and of official recognition of a systematic participation of teachers in the determination of major educational policies is more difficult but fully as desirable. It is hoped that with the help of leading teachers in the elementary schools a system of teacher-participation may soon be devised."¹

2. COUNCILS OF TEACHERS ESTABLISHED BY THE AUTHORITY OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE.

Two conspicuous examples appear under this head, and so far as the inclusion of the whole teaching body is concerned only two. But these are found in the two largest school systems of the country, namely, those of New York and Chicago. They are infants in age, still in the stage of experiment, and although to

¹ For the place of the large committees of teachers now revising the elementary course of study for Boston schools, see under Section III, page 13, of this chapter. The policy of employing the aid of these teachers in this movement is not adopted by the School Committee as a part of the regulations for Boston schools, and cannot be considered as officially instituted.

a great degree successful in their aims, are regarded by some cautious educators and school officials as having not yet positively proved their case.

An intensive study of these two great councils must be regarded in its suggestions as the central interest of this discussion.

a. The Chicago Teachers' Councils.

Inception and Organization.

When some years ago the present Superintendent of Chicago Public Schools was District Superintendent of Schools, she became convinced that the general success and progress of education was hampered by the fact that no effective method existed by which the judgment of teachers in school matters could be ascertained or utilized. After consultation with school people who shared her views, she presented in 1899 to the Board of Education a plan for forming a system of teachers' councils. The result was the unofficial establishment of councils or rather conferences of teachers. The movement "looked forward to a full expression of the judgment of principals and teachers on questions pertaining to courses of study, textbooks, departmental work, duties and advancement of teachers and other educational topics." "That these councils were not productive of a general interest in these questions by the teaching body was largely due," writes the Chicago Superintendent, "to the fact that their origin and conduct were independent of the Board of Education." After Mrs. Young was installed as Superintendent of the Chicago Schools she continued her interest in this movement, but though exercising persistent effort for three years to secure the consensus of opinion from teachers in the attempt to simplify the course of study in the elementary and high schools, it was found that owing to "various and sundry causes" such consensus of opinion could not be obtained. Among these obstructing causes Mrs. Young emphasizes the "evolution in the membership of a body of teachers 7,000 strong of a group consciousness which brings to the surface tendencies sometimes ideal, sometimes dangerous. Chief among the dangerous tendencies is that of disintegration into aggregated units so independent of each other that they be-

come what Mr. Gompers terms "specialists in industry," a class whom he defines as those who know but one part of a trade and absolutely nothing of any other part of it. "With large school systems organized under our present methods, supervisors and superintendents, though occasionally invited to address teachers' clubs, are practically cut off from participation in the life of the teaching body of which they should be active members."

Notwithstanding this somewhat discouraging experience, Mrs. Young continued to have confidence in the possibility of organizing on a democratic basis a teachers' council "that will embody in the school system the ideal for which America stands sponsor."

In the meeting of the Chicago Board of Education, February, 1913, the Superintendent requested that she be given authority to present a plan for the organization of the teaching corps into councils for discussion of educational questions, and for the election from these councils of a General Council which should represent all classes of positions in the system, such council to be presided over by the Superintendent of Schools. The aim of the movement was "to give expression or voice to the different attitudes or judgments of the teaching force and to enable the Superintendent to become conversant at first hand with these attitudes and judgments." The requested authority was granted by the Board, and a plan was made out with the aid of a committee of teachers representing the various voluntary teachers' organizations. This was first presented to the Board of Education Committee on School Management. At its March meeting the plan was adopted by the Board. The general plan is given in the following extract from the proceedings of the Chicago Board of Education.

THE PLAN OF THE CHICAGO COUNCILS

Board of Education, City of Chicago

EDUCATION DIVISION

EXTRACT FROM PROCEEDINGS OF MARCH 20, 1913

Organize Council of Heads of Teaching Force

The Superintendent of Schools recommends that all members of the teaching forces of the City of Chicago be organized into Group Councils for the discussion of educational questions, and for the election from

these Group Councils of a General Council, which shall represent all classes of positions in the system; said General Council to be presided over by the Superintendent of Schools.

The Superintendent further recommends that the organization into Group Councils shall be as follows:

<i>Title of Groups</i>	<i>Number of Groups</i>
Teachers in Elementary Schools	30
Principals in Elementary Schools	8
Teachers in High Schools	8
Principals of High Schools	2
Assistant and District Superintendents	3
Teachers of Household Arts	4
Teachers of Physical Education	4
Teachers of Manual Training	4
Special Teachers of Music and Teachers of Music in Normal College and in High Schools	2
Special Teachers of Art and Teachers of Art in Normal Col- lege and in High Schools	2
German	1
Faculty of Normal College	3
Supervisors of Manual Training and of Household Arts in High Schools and in Elementary Schools, the Child Study De- partment, and the Supervisor of Physical Education.....	1
Teachers of Special Classes	2
	—
	74

That each group upon assembling for its first meeting each year, shall by electing a chairman and a secretary and adopting its own rules of procedure, effect an organization that shall be permanent for one year.

That each of these groups shall elect one delegate to the General Council, who shall serve during the current school year; provided, in case the differences in points of view are too decided to be presented by any one person, then the Group Council shall elect two delegates to the General Council.

That the General Council shall consist of delegates from the Group Councils, to be elected as heretofore provided.

The Group Councils shall meet at 1.30 P. M., on the second Friday of the School months of October and March of each year, and at other times at the call of the Superintendent of Schools.

The General Council shall meet at 10.30 o'clock on the Saturday morning following the Group Council meetings, in the Assembly Room of the Board of Education.

The aim and purpose of the Group Councils and the General Council

shall be to give full and free expression or voice to the different attitudes and judgments of the teaching force, on questions pertaining to Courses of Study, Textbooks, Departmental Work, Duties and Advancement of Teachers, and the General Study of Educational Questions by the entire public school teaching corps, and to enable the Superintendent to become conversant at first hand with these attitudes and judgments.

The subjects for consideration by the Group Councils and the General Council may be proposed by the Superintendent of Schools, or the General Council, or any one of the Group Councils.

The first meeting of the Group Councils will be held on April 18th and the second meeting of the Group Councils will be held on May 23rd. The subject for discussion at the first meeting will be "The Course of Study as It Applies to the Kindergarten and the First Six Grades of the Elementary Schools." The subject for consideration at the second meeting will be "The Course of Study in the Seventh and Eighth Grades and High Schools."

It is not the purpose of these two meetings to discuss details of time, method, or material. The nature of the discussion will be such as would be suggested through a general view of the course, and the relations which the work of each grade bears to the others, and to the general problem of public education.

At the first meeting the groups will assemble according to the following arrangement:

Should the teachers of any school desire to be placed in a different group from the one herein listed, application should be made to the Superintendent for authority to make the change.

Activities of the Chicago Teachers' Councils.

The organization of the Council was effected in the Spring of 1913; its regular sessions began with the October meeting of that year. The subject was announced to the Group Councils through a printed notice sent from the office of the Education Division of the Board of Education and signed by Ella Flagg Young, Chairman of General Council. The general subject of discussion, together with some of the questions connected with it was stated as follows:

- a. Are the terms of vacation high and elementary schools, which have been conducted in July, sufficiently firmly established to be considered as part of the "School Year"?
- b. If (a) is answered affirmatively, how shall the School Year be divided—into 4 quarters of 12 weeks each, or 2 semesters of 20 weeks and a term of 8 weeks?

- c. Should a year's work (the grade) cover 42 weeks or 36 weeks?
- d. Should a teacher's required year be 3 quarters or 3½ quarters?
- e. How should teachers desiring to teach 48 weeks be selected?
- f. Could there be a variation in the time of the "Long Vacation" for those desiring it at other than the usual time?

The above questions are only a few of those which will arise in the Councils.

Sessions:

October 10, Group Councils, 1.30 P. M. to 3.30 P. M.

October 11, General Council, 10.00 A. M. to 12.00 noon.

Members will report non-attendance at Group Council sessions as for any other school session.

The next meeting of the Council took place six months later, March, 1914. The subject as announced beforehand in a notice from the Superintendent was:

The School Day

1. Its length:

a. In the school building.

b. At home in the evening.

These two points to be considered as regards the teacher, the child, the pupil, the student.

2. The possibility of determining the above points definitely.

During the school year in which these two meetings occurred, namely 1913-14, the Chicago school system had been passing through the stirring period of a scientific "survey" and was feeling a mingled exhilaration and dismay, comparable to that of the patient who emerges from a major operation to discover that although he had been far worse off than he knew, he still retains his vital organs and may count on them to perform their functions with little diminution of activity.

The findings of the Survey were published during the Summer of 1914. In the fall the Superintendent of Schools in her notification of the topic scheduled for the October meeting of the Teachers' Council, stated that she had intended to invite the teaching corps to select a subject, but that an intense desire to have the findings of the Survey discussed led her to propose the following: "Methods of Instruction in Elementary and High Schools, Particularly in Mathematics, History, and Art Con-

struction, as Discussed in the Survey.' It was added that it was open to any Council to include among the topics other subjects of instruction that were discussed in the Survey. The next meeting of the Council will be held in the current month, March, 1915. The notice states that any one of the following reports of 1914 may be discussed:

The School Plant.
Administration.
Child Study.

Physical Education.
Humane and Moral Education.
Social Efficiency.

Results of Council deliberations.

Possibly deliberation is not the precise word to use in connection with these debates, since they lead apparently to no formal recommendations, and conclusions, if definite, do not seem to be embodied in a form capable of record or to serve as a basis for further action or deliberation on the part of the Board of Education or its Committees. In respect to this Mrs. Young writes under date of March 1st, 1915: "Delegates meet me the morning after the Group Councils have met and give an oral statement of the consensus of opinion in the various subdivisions and of the recommendations there made. If I approve of these recommendations, I act upon them. Several thus far have been found of value."

Peculiar features of the Chicago Councils.

Legal status.—Although the Councils exist by authority of the Board of Education, they are so peculiarly constituted as to have legal standing only on the condition of direct management by the Superintendent of Schools. This officer is not only Chairman, but president of the General Council. There are no Committees and therefore no reports based on extended sifting of data relating to proposed action or to existing conditions. The General Council does not even advise as a body; it simply reports the consensus of opinion of the Group Councils, discussing subjects in this light with what is reported to be "unrestricted freedom," but with no definite power of recommendation.

Imperfections of the organization.—Mrs. Young frankly admits the scheme is still imperfect; "The first meetings," she states,

“showed need of reorganization. The Council is not too large, but the time is too short.” A whole day, rather than two hours, is needed for due consideration of the topics. Rather, one is fain to think, the topics are too large to be profitably discussed, much less settled, in an open meeting at one short session. The topics, it would seem, should be announced to the Group Councils a long time ahead and thrashed out in separate committees, with some resultant formulated opinions presented, not “orally” to the General Council. That any consensus of opinion is arrived at by present meetings is evidence of skillful leading of discussion on the part of the chairman. Some reorganization is in contemplation. Greater frequency of meetings is obviously needed; but it is not unlikely that teachers however desirous of “expression,” will object to giving up many Saturdays to the discussion of school affairs.

b. The New York Teachers' Council.

Origin of the Council.

“I feel confident from reading the increasing literature on the subject, appearing in various parts of the country and abroad, that the teacher's participation in the planning as well as the managing of education is bound to come and to come with benefit to the schools. . . . We ought not to discourage suggestion for change; we ought not merely to permit it. We ought to ask for it.”¹

The history of the various discontents, desires and convictions which led to the official establishment of teacher-participation in the counsels of the New York Public School System in 1913 would present on the one hand a significant study of the psychological responses of a special professional group to its occupational conditions; and on the other, shows from the point of view of that group some of the defects in method and failures in result in what is probably the most completely organized system of school administration of the present time. Among the chief failures, it was claimed, was the non-utilization in institutional form of the valuable experience and judgment of its teaching

¹ Report of the President, Board of Education. New York City. January, 1914.

body. A movement to secure representation in the school system was initiated by some of the teaching force in New York in 1900, when the new City Charter was in process of formation, with Henry Taft as Chairman of the Committee of Revision and Nicholas Murray Butler as Chief Adviser on the Educational Section. At that time a delegation of teachers waited upon the Revision Committee with a proposal that some form of teacher-participation be incorporated. Their proposal was rejected, but the desire for a recognized means of expression was not abandoned. Before his appointment President Churchill was interested in the subject; after he was installed in office his interest became a purpose, reinforced by that section of the Report of the Survey of the New York Schools which recommended "that appropriate steps be taken to secure the creation of a supervisory council to be composed of the City Superintendent, all of the district superintendents, and a selected number of directors, principals of training schools, principals of high schools, principals of elementary schools, and representatives of the teaching staff in various types and grades of schools. To this supervisory council shall be given general powers and directions with regard to programs of study and all other essential matters relating to the methods and standards of instruction."¹

The organization along these lines did not meet with favor on the part of the Board of Superintendents. Nevertheless, a thoughtful study of conditions by the President and certain members of the Board of Education culminated in the resolution to test a form of teacher-representation in school management. The convenient and obvious method of crystallizing this proposal into a definite plan was to work through the voluntary organizations of teachers, forty-five of which were in existence in Greater New York.

How the Council was formed.

Acting upon the request of the President of the Board of Education, the presidents of the voluntary teachers' associations took up the matter of organization of such a council in the spring of 1913. Their recommendations were sent to the President of the

¹ Report of the Survey of the New York Public Schools.

Board through a committee consisting of two men and two women. There was a public hearing on the matter, after which the Committees on By-laws and Legislation of the Board of Education approved the plan for a Teachers' Council in the form in which it was presented to the Board. On July 9, 1913, the Board officially concurred in the action of the last named committee. On October 8th, the Board approved a plan for the election of members of the Teachers' Council submitted by the Committees on By-laws and Legislation, and in the following November the members of the Council were elected in accordance with the plans. The following is the plan of organization as it assumed final shape in Constitution and By-laws:

Plan of Organization of the Council.

- I. *Name.* The organization shall be known as the Teachers' Council.
- II. *Function.* The function of the council shall be:
 1. Furnishing of information and opinions of the teaching staff (principals and teachers) upon questions submitted by the Board of Education or by the Board of Superintendents.
 2. Introduction of recommendations concerning problems affecting the welfare of the schools and of the teaching staff. All final decisions shall be left to the Board of Education or the Board of Superintendents.
- III. *Powers.* The Teachers' Council shall be allowed absolute freedom in its debates and deliberations.
- IV. *Membership.* The Teachers' Council shall be composed of 45 representatives from such voluntary teachers' organizations as were in existence March 1, 1913, and from such other organizations as may thereafter be recognized by the Board of Education.
- V. *Distribution of Representation.* Representation in the Teachers' Council shall be distributed as follows:
 1. Secondary Schools (High and Training)

a. Principal	1
b. First assistant	1
c. Men teachers	2
d. Women teachers	2
e. Teachers in training schools	1
—	
Total from Secondary Schools....	7

2. Elementary Schools

a. Principals

Boroughs

Manhattan (1 man, 1 woman).....	2
Brooklyn (1 man, 1 woman).....	2
Bronx	1
Queens	1
Richmond	1

Total 7

b. Assistants to principals or heads of departments 4

c. Teachers of the 7th and 8th grades (2 men, 2 women) 4

d. Teachers of the 1st to 6th grades, inclusive

Boroughs

Manhattan	3
Brooklyn	3
Bronx	2
Queens	2
Richmond	1

Total 11

e. Kindergarten teachers 1

f. Shopwork teachers 1

g. Cooking teachers 1

h. Additional teachers 1

Total from Elementary Schools.... 30

3. Other public school activities: evening schools, vocational, trade, continuation, disciplinary schools; recreation, sewing, drawing, music, physical training, etc. 3

4. Representatives at large elected by the Council... 5

Grand Total 45

VI. *Method of Election.* The method of election shall be as follows:

1. Each secondary school teachers' organization which includes principals in its membership shall elect two secondary school principals as delegates to a conference. The members of this conference . . . shall elect *one* secondary principal as a member of the Teachers' Council.

2. Each teachers' organization which includes elementary school principals in its membership shall elect two elementary school principals as delegates to a conference. The members of this conference shall . . . elect *seven* elementary school principals as members of the Teachers' Council.
3. Each teachers' organization which includes teachers of the first to the sixth-year classes, inclusive, shall elect three delegates to a conference. This conference shall elect *eleven* teachers as members of the Teachers' Council.
4. In like manner the teachers' organizations concerned shall send *two* delegates to each appropriate conference for the election of representatives of all the other groups provided for in Article V, except for the election of representatives at large.
5. All the conferences for election shall be held on the same date.
6. A candidate for the Teachers' Council need not be a delegate to a conference nor a member of a voluntary teachers' organization, but must be of the rank or grade assigned to the conference.

Other important provisions are, that each member of the Council shall as "far as possible" represent the views of his constituents, and that any group of electors may recall its representative by a majority vote of the delegates from that group. It is also provided that several standing committees shall be formed and each member of the Council shall have a place upon one at least of these committees. Amendments may be made in the usual manner by a two-thirds vote after due notice. The expenses of the Council for clerical work, stationery, etc., shall be borne by the Board of Education.

The electors meet in joint conference on the second Thursday of November, each year, the place of meeting and temporary chairman being designated by the Board. Members of the Council are elected by ballot; nominations are made by delegates of the same rank as members proposed, but they may be chosen by the respective groups of their own rank or by the conference as a whole. The results of election are immediately transmitted to the Secretary of the Board of Education.

The By-laws provide that the officers shall be a President, Vice-President, a Corresponding Secretary and a Recording Secretary. The Standing Committees are as follows:

Standing Committees of the Council.

1. The Executive Committee, consisting of the President, the Recording Secretary (ex officio) and the Chairman of the Standing Committees.
2. Committees on Courses of Study, Syllabuses and Programs.
3. Committee on School Records and Statistics.
4. Committee on Truancy and Delinquency.
5. Committee on Vocational Interests.
6. Committee on Advancement of Pupils.
7. Committee on Organization and Administration.
8. Committee on Evening Schools and Recreation Centers.
9. Committee on Professional Interests.
10. Committee on Special Schools and Classes.
11. Committee on Parents' Associations and Community Needs.

Apportionment of Council Members.

It will be noted that the appointment of members is made with reference not only to the rank of the teachers but to the difference in the size of school population in the five boroughs of Greater New York. Of the forty-five members of the Council, eighteen, or about one-third, are men. The chairmen of the standing committees about equally divide the sexes. The President of the Council in 1914 was an eighth grade teacher, now acting-principal of an elementary school, the Vice-President a seventh grade teacher of Brooklyn, the Recording Secretary an eighth grade teacher in Brooklyn, and the Corresponding Secretary the principal of an elementary school in Long Island City. Not rank but personality was regarded in the elections. Membership on the Standing Committees was "based on the individual preferences of members so far as other necessary considerations would permit, with the two-fold purpose of securing the best equipped and the most willing workers upon the respective committees."

The activities of the Council during its first year.

The first meeting of the Council was held in November, 1913; its actual work began in January, 1914, with the consideration of questions submitted by the Board of Education. Eighteen meetings were held during the year and more than thirty-five questions considered. The source, disposition and status of the more important of these questions is stated on pages 38-40.

CERTAIN QUESTIONS CONSIDERED BY THE COUNCIL IN 1914.

<i>Subject</i>	<i>Presented by</i>	<i>Referred to</i>	<i>Status</i>
1. Results of Trial Course in Arithmetic in Elementary Schools.	Board of Education.	Committee on Courses of Study.	Board of Superintendents revising syllabus.
2. Proposed Course of Study in History.	Board of Education.	Committee on Courses of Study.	Reported adopted by Board of Education.
3. Changes Necessary in Courses of Study in Elementary and High Schools.	Board of Education.	Committee on Courses of Study.	No report.
4. Discipline of Pupils—Methods of Enforcing and Changes in Compulsory Educational Law.	Board of Education.	Committee on Truancy and Delinquency.	Report received by Board of Education. Handled by Subcommittee on Special Schools.
5. Preparation of Plan for Rating Teachers and Judging Superior Merit.	Board of Education.	Committees on Professional Interests.	Referred to Committee on Legislation of Board of Education. No report.
9. Double Sessions in High Schools.	Miss L. E. Gans. ¹	Committee on Organization and Administration.	Report in preparation.

¹ High school teacher.

<i>Subject</i>	<i>Presented by</i>	<i>Referred to</i>	<i>Status</i>
12. Investigation of Home Work Required of Pupils in the Elementary and High Schools.	Board of Education.	Committee on Advancement of Pupils.	No report.
18. Ratings of Teachers.	Board of Education; a communication from Association of Women Principals.	Committee on Professional Interests.	Board of Ed. referred to Committee on Elementary Schools. Referred to Sub-committee of one, Mr. Martin.
23. Board of Education to Secure and Supervise Adequate Number of Playgrounds and Play Centers.	Mr. Wm. J. Morrison. ¹	Committee on Truancy and Delinquency.	Referred to Committee on Special Schools and Classes.
28. Instruction in Domestic Science for Over-age Classes of Sixth Grade Girls to be Resumed.	Committee on Vocational Interests.	Committee on Vocational Interests.	No report.
29. Part-Time in High Schools.	Mr. E. Quimby. ²	Committee on Organization and Administration.	No report.

¹ Principal of Elementary School and Member of the Council.

² Teacher in High School.

CERTAIN QUESTIONS CONSIDERED BY THE COUNCIL IN 1914.

<i>Subject</i>	<i>Presented by</i>	<i>Referred to</i>	<i>Status</i>
33. Dispense with June Promotions and Hold Promotions First Day in September.	Miss McAuliffe. ¹	Committee on Organization and Administration.	No report.
34. Work Certificates. Practical Information to Classes.	Mr. VanDenburg. ²	Executive Committee.	Board of Education referred to Committee on Special Schools.
36. a. Fix Deductions for Absence Days of Service, etc.	Board of Superintendents to Board of Education and thence referred to Council.	Committee on Professional Interests.	No report.
b. Secure Data as to Actual Hours of Service Rendered by Teachers.	Miss McAuliffe.		

¹ Teacher in High School.² Principal of Elementary School.

Analysis of this list of topics gives some results shown in the subjoined tables.

RELATION OF TOPICS DISCUSSED BY NEW YORK TEACHERS' COUNCIL IN
THE YEAR 1913 TO 1914

<i>Topics relating to</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Per cent</i>
Pupils' interests directly	15	41
Teachers' interests directly	6	16
Details of administration	7	19
Business of the Council	9	24
Total	37	100

SOURCE OF QUESTIONS DISCUSSED BY COUNCIL

<i>Communications from</i>	<i>Number</i>
Board of Education directly	10
Board of Superintendents through Board of Education.....	1
Association of Women Principals through Board of Education	1
State Commissioner of Education	1
Committees of the Council	5
Members of the Council	15
Teachers or Teachers' Associations	3
Resolution of Council	1
Total	37

Effectiveness of the Council recommendations.

From the teachers' point of view the fact of paramount importance in relation to these deliberations is the final disposition of the questions discussed. When the question has been submitted by the Board of Education to the Council it is a pretty sure indication that the Board intends to accept the Council's conclusions. The records show that in several instances this has been done, especially in matters relating to proposed changes in course of study. The course in history made out by the Council's Committee has been accepted by the Board and is in use. The Council's report on the trial course in arithmetic was utilized by the Board of Superintendents in revising the syllabus in arithmetic. The report of the Council on the rating of teachers was referred by the Board of Education to the Board of Superintendents and adopted by that body. In instances where "no

report" is found under the caption "status" it does not indicate that action has not been taken, but that investigation is still proceeding. The several Committees of the Council are aware that their work is not only requested but needed, to guide the action of the authorities. It is needless to state that this knowledge is an incentive to their energy.

General view of the work and influence of the New York Teachers' Council.

The report of its President, Mr. Gross, submitted to the Council in December, 1914, embodies the conclusions of the Council and its constituents, the teachers of New York.

"Ladies and Gentlemen:

"Following the organization of the Council in December, 1913, the Board of Education submitted to it for consideration a number of the most important problems affecting school government and instruction. In addition to these, the Council of its own initiative submitted by resolution or report a series of recommendations concerning schools and teachers.

"The amount of labor expended upon these problems, the zeal and interest enlisted in their solution, and the value of the deductions and recommendations constitute a notable achievement.

"To you belongs the credit of being the means by which, in one short year (to quote the report of the President of the Board of Education) "the desire to foster a spirit of dignity and responsibility in the teaching staff by employing its experience and judgment in the formulation of school policies has been realized to a gratifying degree," and in pursuing your investigations you have "summed up recommendations with a completeness and clarity which give the Board of Education in convenient form a more satisfactory basis for judgment than has ever before been obtainable in reference to these questions." . . .

"The Council has justified the purpose in founding it, of giving concrete expression to ideas long nurtured in the minds of many who sought a means of voluntary (as supplementing the necessary official) coöperation between the administrative heads of the greatest public school system in the world and the great army of teachers engaged in it.

"Yours is a just claim to the successful demonstration of this experiment and yours the title of pioneers in a great educational movement which is destined to be followed wherever progress and democracy are sought in the development of an educational system.

"Too much praise can hardly be given your Committees for the admirable work they have done in searching for data, tabulating returns, formulating opinions and drafting their reports. . . .

"That your Committees served you faithfully and efficiently was abundantly proven by the respect, interest and approval with which their reports were received and considered by the Council, by the administration and by the school public. It is safe to say that these reports have been largely responsible for making the current year a notable one for the keenest and most widespread discussion of school problems. . . .

"That the progress of certain of your recommendations was slow after leaving your hands is not to be wondered at, nor disparaged when fair consideration is given to the extent and diversity of the interests involved in some of them, the difficulties in the way of preparatory legislation or amendment needed by others, and the responsibility for final action which rests solely upon the administrative department.

"The general faith in the sincerity and disinterestedness of the Council as a whole has been manifested in a number of ways but most strikingly, perhaps, in the generous response of the teaching body to conferences, circulars, and hearings, and in the great gathering of delegates from all parts of the city and from all ranks and grades, to attend the two general conventions for the election of members of the Council which have thus far been held.

"The school system of New York is a vast and complex educational machine, far too great for any one individual to manage or to successfully study and solve all the interests, issues and requirements involved in its structure. . . .

"Let us devote sufficient time and observation to the study of the part we claim to be weak, let us compare notes with others whose judgment may be as good and perhaps better than ours

because of greater experience (and therefore longer observation). If all who are interested could approach the subject of improving the schools in this spirit, reforms would be sure and lasting, not temporary and spasmodic as so many have been in the past; and the labor of the Council and of the whole directorate would be much lightened. . . .

“In conclusion your Chairman extends his cordial acknowledgment and appreciation for the whole-souled coöperation of every member of the Council in upholding its dignity in all its proceedings, in the earnest and concerted effort to demonstrate its usefulness, and in the unstinted devotion of time, energy, and personal interest in the achievement of its fine purpose.”

General consideration of the New York Teachers' Council.

Legal status and function.—The Teachers' Council was established by the New York Board of Education; its legal status, therefore, is as definite as that of the local School Boards, or of the Board of Superintendents, since it, as they do, derives its authority from and reports directly to the Board.¹ Its function is comparable to that of a Congressional committee to which are referred questions requiring the accumulation of data and the opinion of special experience before they can be put into a form capable of profitable discussion in the larger legislative body. It is contended by the majority of school boards that have taken account of the matter at all that the function of such a Council is now adequately exercised by the supervising officers and expert directors already in their service. These, it is claimed, are in close touch with the conduct of the schools, are in a position to make needed investigations and on their basis to bring recommendations to the Board. It is evident that whatever may have been the conviction of the supervisory officials in New York on this question, the Board of Education and the teaching body are in agreement as to the fallacy of this conclusion. They claim that superintendents of whatever rank cannot, in a large city school system, be familiar with the actual working of school methods or the con-

¹ The legal status of the Council is definite, but since no provision for it is made in the City Charter, it is not necessarily permanent.

crete effect of certain policies. They must and do take their opinions from brief visits to individual schools, or from the few principals and teachers whom exigencies of time, space, and multifarious duties permit them to interview. The By-laws of the New York Board of Education assign in twenty-five different items a variety of duties to the District Superintendents, among which are a general inspection of each school twice a year and the visitation of "every class of such schools as often as practicable." The last regulation is largely to give opportunity for judgment on the ability of the teacher. That these hasty visits to the class-room give the Superintendent little knowledge of the teacher's real caliber and afford no time for discussions of the important conditions of the work is the contention of all teachers in large cities. This does not necessarily militate against the practices of the Superintendent; it rather indicates that in the New York schools, and by inference in large systems elsewhere, the most highly systematized administration cannot provide for adequate information on many important matters without employing the first-hand knowledge of the teaching body to whose direction these matters are entrusted.

It is the function, then, of the Teachers' Council to get together information, experience and opinions on certain questions; to discuss the resulting reports fully; and finally to make the recommendations which are transmitted to the Board. The Council cannot legislate; it is advisory only, but its advice is like that of a physician, so expert that it spells large risk to disregard it. As a matter of fact up to the present the New York Board of Education has never disregarded the recommendations of the Council. With the ratification of the Board of Superintendents these recommendations have been in several cases adopted and have become school regulations; in other cases they have been referred to Board Committees or back to Council Committees, for further study. But whatever the disposition made of them the Council recommendations have been received with respect and considered with deliberation.

Methods of procedure.—The advisory function of the Council is usually exercised upon questions referred to it by the Board

of Education;—questions which may have arisen in the Board, or which have been submitted to it by the Board of Superintendents. An example of the first class is the question of a plan for reducing part-time classes. The method of procedure on the part of the Council was as follows: The question was brought to its Executive Committee on January 16, and by them assigned to the Committee on the Advancement of Pupils. After careful and extended inquiry by means of hearings and questionnaires sent to schools and teachers, this Committee presented its report to the Executive Committee March 10th; on April 2nd the report was read before the Council, was adopted and sent to the Board of Education; the Board referred the report back to the President of the Council for appropriate action; the President appointed a Special Committee on Part-time; this Committee is still working at the subject.

The part-time question has been for years a fruitful bone of contention, a source of discontent to parents, teachers and children. If the teachers can relieve the situation by their investigations and recommendations they will have conferred a real service to the community; if their best invention cannot do this, it is certain they will themselves have more patience to endure conditions which cannot at present be altered.¹

Of the second class is the question of deductions from teachers' salaries for absence during days of service, a question brought by the Board of Superintendents before the Board of Education and by that body referred to the Teachers' Council. It was assigned to the Committee on Professional Interests, whose report was brought before the Executive Committee October 20th; was presented to the Council November 13th, and after discussion referred back to the Committee on Professional Interests for further consideration.

In these instances, as in all important questions, the action of the Council has been marked by a painstaking deliberation. Its conclusions must therefore be regarded as an invaluable aid to the shaping of administrative policy along certain lines.

Matters suitable and unsuitable for the Council's consideration.—As has been shown in the analysis of the Council's dis-

¹ See Appendix A. 4.—Report of the Committee on Part-Time.

cussions for 1913-14, the main subjects of deliberation were those related to the content and application of the school course, the methods of internal school management, and the status of teachers. On a multitude of other matters chiefly administrative, the Council has not been, and from any practical business point of view, should not be, consulted. Conviction on this point, as well as an enlarged view of the complex details of the business of a large school system must seize the mind of any plain citizen as well as of the teacher who examines the Report on the "Organization of the Board of Education and Its Committees." In this Report Director Shiels of the Division of Reference and Research gives a list of items brought for consideration or confirmation before the New York Board of Education from August 2nd to December 23rd, 1914. The total number of items was 1,050, each of which required for a space of time the attention of the Board, however brief and perfunctory that attention may have been. Dr. Shiels' enumeration is intended to show that many of these matters should, without reference to the Board, be adjusted by heads of bureaus or other officers. The study of his analysis is, however, pertinent to our present discussion.

Dr. Shiels classifies the 1,050 items as below:

<i>Class</i>	<i>Number</i>
Legislative	
General	46
Financial	67
	—
	113
Inspectorial	19
Administrative	
Financial	92
Building and Supplies	162
School Organization	79
School Conduct	37
Teaching and Supervising Staff	297
Other Employees	227
Miscellaneous	24
	—
	918
	—
Total	1,050

Under the head of "Legislation" we find twenty-five items concerned with amending by-laws; of these, one, which was referred to the Teachers' Council, had to do with the reductions of salary for a teacher's absence. In several other cases, recommendations from the Council were considered; as those relating to change in course of study, naming of schools, etc.

Under the head "Inspectorial" the items had to do with the appointment and assignment of the officers of the Board as District Superintendents, physicians, etc. It is, of course, self-evident that under any existing school organization these matters should not fittingly come before a Teachers' Council chosen from a body of employees unauthorized to appoint the supervisory force.

The largest number of items is found under the various divisions of "Administrative Matters." Under this division are questions of finance relating mainly to appropriations and expenditures, routine matters brought before the Board from the appropriate Committees for final action. They are, of course, entirely unsuitable for Council consideration. The same must be said of the majority of the items under "Buildings and Supplies," though one or two, as for example the recommendation of the substitution of chemically prepared dusters for the ubiquitous feather-duster, might well have been stamped with the approval of the Teachers' Council. On the whole, however, these are items of a technical character as to which the teachers as a whole have no experience.

With the two hundred and twenty-seven items relating to the non-teaching employees of the Board the Council also could have no concern. This is true also of the "Miscellaneous" group which includes communications, reports, and resolutions on matters of extraordinary character, usually from the City Departments.

There remains three important classes of items which will certainly raise special interest in the minds of teachers ready to "take a hand" in school planning. These are "school organization," "school conduct," and "teaching and organizing staff."

A close examination of the list of items under "school organization" makes it clear, however, that the actions indicated can

be undertaken only by those who are familiar with not only the whole educational field, but with the particular demands of certain districts, of special classes in the community, and finally with the available resources, personal and financial, of the administration. The Council is not competent, for instance, to select a school in which shorthand shall be taught, or to organize eleven new schools and twenty annexes, or to judge the expediency of organizing classes at infant asylums, department stores, etc. In short, the great majority of these items have been properly considered by special committees after investigations by experts who had the time and knowledge teachers do not possess. The rational teacher, who is, after all, in the great majority, would be as averse to deciding these matters as the ordinary passenger to directing a tram-car.

“School Conduct” heads another class of items promising a field for teacher-advice. But examination proves that here also recommendations should come from officials familiar with particular school and community conditions. A full list of items under this head will be illustrative of the latter point.

MATTERS ON SCHOOL CONDUCT BROUGHT BEFORE THE BOARD OF EDUCATION.

1. Granting permission to school organizations.
 - a. To hold public entertainments in school buildings.
 - b. To City College to conduct free extension centers for teachers in school buildings.
 - c. To a Mothers' Club to sell tickets for an entertainment.
 - d. To a principal to collect money for milk sold in school.
2. Considering propositions to open certain buildings in the afternoons and evenings as recreation centers for teachers.
3. Establishing lunch service in the schools.

The last proposition might fitly be discussed by the Council; the others relate to the use of public property and can only be decided by the custodians of that property, namely, the School Board or its deputed representative.

And finally comes the significant heading "Teaching and Supervising Staff." But after all, the items listed here are nearly all on the routine calendar and involve no questions of general significance so far as the status or interests of teachers are concerned. The list of items is given below.

ITEMS RELATING TO TEACHING AND SUPERVISING STAFF BROUGHT BEFORE
THE BOARD OF EDUCATION:

<i>Cases</i>	<i>Number of Items</i>
Transferring teachers and principals	29
Appointing from eligible lists	68
Special assignments to give instruction; make vocational survey, special clerical work, etc.	12
Assigning teachers in charge	6
Granting leave of absence	50
Reporting deaths or resignations	8
Reporting deaths of retired teachers	7
Retiring teachers	12
Salaries	3
Submitting names of teachers who have been married.....	7
Submitting names of persons licensed to teach	9
Submitting names to be added to eligible lists	9
Preferring charges against teachers	6

Shall an advisory body of teachers make recommendations as to the assignment, status and recruiting of the teaching force? It seems clear that such a body may properly discuss certain general principles in their relation to these matters, but to recommend action in individual cases would be beyond question perilous to the best interests of those concerned. Rebellion would instantly arise were teachers to find their positions and prospects manipulated by a committee of their fellows.

To sum up, then, of these 1,050 items of school policy and business brought before the Board of Education in the space of nine months, not more than half a dozen altogether represented subjects suitable for Council discussion. On the other hand, the thirty-seven topics listed by the Secretary of the Council *were* suitable; first, because without availing themselves of the knowledge and experience of the teachers, the supreme school authority could not rightly form its judgment; secondly, because certain questions arising on the initiation of the Councils' mem-

bers or Committees, could have reached open-air discussion through no other medium.

Imperfections and disadvantages of the New York Council.

Difficulty of making the Council truly representative.—The very first question brought before the Council sitting in Committee of the whole was a communication from the teachers of special branches showing dissatisfaction with the plan proposed for their representation in the Council. Although the high schools have not asked for larger representation inquiry discloses among a number of high school teachers the conviction that propositions affecting the high school matters are better kept out of the Council, because the high school representatives will be "voted down" by numbers. To quote the head of a high school department, "We have had able members in the Council. They tell us that any purely *high school* question had better not be submitted to the Council as the high school representation is relatively so small that in a vote it is simply swamped. Moreover, the broadest-minded representative of a grammar school is apt to misunderstand a high school problem. Unfortunately the elementary school people are not always broad-minded. We believe that there should be opportunity to have high school questions considered by high school representatives whose findings should be respected. At present, high school questions are carefully kept away from the Council and are brought before the Superintendents and the Committees of the Board of Education in some other way."

In connection with this statement it may be well to give here the actual make-up of the Council:

PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION IN THE NEW YORK TEACHERS' COUNCIL

<i>Secondary Schools (High and Training)</i>	<i>Number of Representatives</i>	<i>Per Cent of Membership</i>
Principals	1	
First assistant ¹	1	
Men teachers	2	
Women teachers	2	
Teacher in training school	1	
	7	15.6

¹ Means Head of Department.

	<i>Number of Representatives</i>	<i>Per Cent of Membership</i>
<i>Elementary Schools</i>		
Principals	7	
Assistants to Principals or Heads of De- partments	4	
Teachers of 7th and 8th years	4	
Teachers of 1st to 6th years	11	
Kindergarten teacher	1	
	—	
	27	60.0
<i>Special teachers</i>		
Shop work	1	
Domestic science	1	
Additional teacher	1	
	—	
	3	6.7
<i>Evening schools</i> or recreation centers	3	6.7
	—	
<i>Representatives at large</i>	5	11.0
	—	
	45	100.0

The numerical representation certainly must have been difficult to adjust. We have no data to determine whether it was based on relative numbers in the classes of school population or of the teachers in various ranks, probably the latter. If either be the case the high school teachers have been generously considered, since the high school attendance is only a little over 6 per cent of the whole, while the high school teachers, who form about 11 per cent of the whole teaching body are more than 15 per cent in the Council. Their distinct class consciousness is evinced by the remarks just quoted, an additional proof of the regrettable gap between the interests of the elementary school and the high school. Perhaps the Council may do a great service in a back-handed way by bringing the fact of this chasm into prominence. The need of a bridge-over is well illustrated by the remark of a Boston high school teacher of long experience, who replied with pronounced indifference in answer to some query about conditions in the elementary schools:

“I do not know at all. It is so long since I had anything to do with the elementary schools. I know nothing about them.”

This teacher would know more were she a member of a Council.

The present indifference of a large proportion of the teaching body to the new movement.—This indifference as to the value and activities of the Council on the part of many teachers is undoubted. Time and effort will doubtless largely minimize it. Still there will always be in a large school system teachers who are indifferent to any sort of movement looking to the general improvement of the schools. Some of these will be spasmodically interested in agitations bearing on their own status or benefit, but they are the commercially minded who hang, a choking, dead weight, about the neck of intelligent endeavor. Another class of indifferents is made up of the elder war-worn principals and teachers who have seen the new burdens of responsibility come with the passing years, most of them to stay. Their central ambition is to hold on desperately and stolidly till they can rest from their labors with a pension, hoping that their works will not follow them.

Other risks, disabilities, dangers, benefits, and disadvantages will doubtless be brought into prominence with the lapses of time. The Council is yet new.

Some opinions about the New York Teachers' Council.

The Principal of an elementary school for all grades:

“I have paid but little attention to the work of the Teachers' Council or its special advantages. Several circulars have been sent me, to which I have replied as requested. You might write to the Secretary of the Teachers' Council. I don't know who the Secretary is, but it would probably reach him or her. I anticipate retirement in the near future.”

A group of young and active teachers in a high school:

“We are all rather absorbed in the strenuous life we have undertaken. Among those who have definite knowledge of the Council there is discovered no tendency to discount the Council or its work. In the fall we all voted on two questions presented to us by the Council and have since then seen our pretty nearly unanimous opinion on one of them embodied in a Report to the

Board of Education. We are surfeited with questionnaires, but these are treated with much respect. Those who know the Council's work best speak highly of the Council and its work."

The head of an English department in a large high school:

"The Council fills a long-felt want, has apparently a fairly representative membership, is certainly very faithful (its membership is badly overworked, in fact) and has been influential with the Board of Education, I judge. I think it is a step in the right direction. At present it cannot be more than an advisory body. Most of its activities, as I understand the matter, have been called out by questions referred to it by President Churchill and the Board of Education. I should like to see it have opportunity to originate more suggestions or to take up questions proposed by the schools and the teachers. I think it has this power and has exercised it in a limited degree. In some way individual members should have less work to do. Whether the conditions call for a larger membership or a relief from some school duty, I do not know. It is currently believed that the individual members are too heavily weighted."

An eighth grade teacher (man):

"That the teachers' associations of the public schools of this city recognize the need and the importance of a Teachers' Council was evident at the Electoral Convention held at the Dewitt Clinton High School on November 12th, 1914. Forty associations had elected about four hundred delegates to take part in the election of the members of the Council whose terms expire in 1914."

A teachers' organization (opinion as reported):

"The method of obtaining representation has aroused dissatisfaction. It is contended that delegates from individual schools should be chosen for the electoral assembly, rather than from the teachers' organizations, thus insuring more adequate local representation. Although the great number of school units would offer difficulties in working this, it is undoubtedly the fairer method. The attitude of this organization is on the whole unfriendly to the Council."

The City Superintendent:

"A principal states that in a recent conversation with Dr.

Maxwell, the latter spoke favorably of the Council and said that the Council and some other organization of the teachers had presented some valuable suggestions and information to the educational authorities. He commented favorably on the great industry of the Council's Committees."

The President of the Board of Education:

"When you consider the great numbers of teachers in the schools and the sometimes over-animated discussions that have occurred in educational circles in past years, you must commend the spirit with which this Council has come together. If the feeling of responsibility for the highest form of service should at any time be weak in this Council, if the frailty of human nature should show itself in bickering or petty personal ambitions, we shall find reason for it in a misguided policy of school administration which has too long centered responsibility and initiation in too narrow a circle at the top. The Teachers' Council will not, I feel sure, disappoint the expectations you entertain for it. If there is any cynicism about its success in this city I believe it is due to an attitude toward teachers which has tended to destroy and atrophy the natural instinct for discovery and improvement that belongs to every normal mind that is trying to do work intelligently. The success of the Teachers' Council will depend to an equal degree upon us. Just as soon as that organization finds itself entrusted with important questions; just as soon as it finds its conclusions received with intent to put every recommendation possible into practice, the dignity of contributing something more than academic discussion will give tone and inspiration to the Council." ¹

NOTE.—A list of certain Reports made by the New York Teachers' Council, 1914, will be found in Appendix A, p. 73.

NEW YORK AND CHICAGO TEACHERS' COUNCILS COMPARED.

1. *SIMILARITIES.*

a. Legal status.

Although the New York Council was formed by direct request of the President of the Board, and the Chicago Councils through

¹ Report of the President to the Board of Education, New York City, 1914.

accession of the Board to a request from the Superintendent of Schools, both have official place in the school system, both hold their meetings in official headquarters, and in both cases incidental expenses are met from the general school fund.

b. Basis of representation.

In Chicago the groups of teachers electing delegates to the General Council are designated by rank or occupation, while in New York they are Associations or Leagues. The constituency is in both cities practically the same and includes the whole teaching body. It also provides in both cases for local representation in the delegates chosen, recognizing that no discussion of school problems in a large city with its diverse elements of population could be intelligent without the knowledge of local conditions.

2. *DIFFERENCES.*

a. Relation to the officers of administration.

In New York the Board of Superintendents regard the Teachers' Council with no active and perhaps no positive hostility; but they remain apparently unconvinced of the necessity or prudence of its existence. That it has accomplished valuable work is admitted, but it is claimed that this work could be accomplished through the Administration's Bureaus and Departments. The opportunity for the teaching force to express its views unreservedly and to propose measures is considered a doubtful advantage.

Just the opposite is the case in Chicago. The real attitude of the Board of Education it is difficult to know further than that it has lent its support without cavil to the Superintendent's plan, but the supervisory officers and the prominent educational directors in Chicago are apparently cordially supporting the Councils. One of the New York Associate Superintendents, who made a trip to the West December last, reports that in Chicago he found "the general policy of utilizing the brains of teachers for the improvement and continued adaptability of the school system to the requirements of life." He quotes at length from the principal of the Chicago Normal Training School, who asserts that the faculty of that institution actively share with the City Superintendent of Schools' conviction that "the time is ripe for the re-

versal of old-time school management from its habit of centralized thinking, planning and ruling, conviction of the wisdom of the substitution of teachers' discovery, recommendation and participation in a process that requires a generous amount of patience, diplomacy, self-suppression, and temporary acceptance, sometimes, of plans not quite so good as the people way up at the top might make. You could not watch and talk with Chicago teachers without realizing that one enthusiastically working out a second-rate plan of her own is usually benefiting the children a great deal more than one who is using a first-rate plan that has been forced on her too arbitrarily. To get that enthusiasm which accompanies her own inventions the management of the Chicago school system promotes the Council idea."

b. Inclusion of Chicago supervisory officers.

Another marked difference, and one which perhaps has to do with the general support of the Council idea by the management, is the inclusion of supervisory officers in the Chicago Council. Three of the Group Councils are made up of Assistant and District Superintendents, three of the members of the faculty of the Normal College, one of the supervisors of special branches. Each of these groups has a representative on the General Council. The New York Council has no representation from the administrative circles and at the present writing desires none. The reason seems to be a conviction on the part of the teaching body that it is the aim of New York administration on the whole to dominate rather than to coöperate. This feeling, more or less strongly marked, is pretty generally discoverable among the teachers of any system that is effectively organized. The presence of the supervisory officers does not appear to have modified the freedom of debate in Chicago.

c. Method of considering questions.

The method of consideration of questions proposed is radically different. The Chicago Council is summoned to report and to discuss *opinions*; the New York Council meets to formulate *recommendations*. The opinions of the Chicago Council are put into the shape of recommendations by the City Superintendent,

if she approves them. The recommendations of the New York Council are brought before the Board of Education or the Board of Superintendents, which bodies are bound to take some action upon them.

The New York Council's responsibility in forming recommendations that may be practically adopted as parts of administrative policy entails the use of Committees to give the requisite time to collecting data on the questions in hand. The fact that these committees closely duplicate in most cases the fields covered by the Committees of the Board of Education militates in no degree against the value of their work. The viewpoint is different; the available sources of data are different, and, as a result, a measure considered by the New York Council put into the form of recommendation and again referred by the Board of Education to its own Committee has been tried by all the tests that various points of attack can furnish. A case in point is the recent adoption of a revised course in arithmetic for the elementary schools, embodying several of the recommendations made by the New York Teachers' Council,—but not all. The report of the Council was thoroughly discussed by the Board of Superintendents and certain suggestions as to furnishing teachers type problems and type solutions for each grade were rejected on the ground that if this were done "it would deprive a teacher of all initiative." The Board of Education has now published the arithmetic syllabus as a bulletin of the Teachers' Council.

CHAPTER III

TEACHERS' CLUBS AS FACTORS IN SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

The preceding chapters have cited instances of the utilization when occasion demanded of voluntary teachers' organizations in the formation of committees or councils of teachers. The growing movement toward the formation of these societies, especially in large school systems, is proof that the impulse of self-expression in a body of workers will, if blocked in one direction, inevitably find another. A writer on modern educational movements observes that a complete study of the voluntary teachers' organizations of the United States would be a valuable contribution to social study, "but," he adds, "it would be next to impossible to collect the necessary data." We heartily agree on both points.

The data collected shows, however, that these organizations in towns and cities fall into different types as affected by local conditions, the size of the school system or the pressure of a particular emergency. The simplest though apparently least common type of organization is the club formed for social purposes merely. For teachers to flock by themselves with this object in view would seem on first consideration unwise, since in their calling there is peculiar need to modify the too dominant professional point of view through relations that foster a stronger community consciousness. But it must be remembered that in many towns and smaller cities the schools are largely manned by teachers from outside, who have few or no local connections and for whom the teachers' club offers opportunity for social intercourse with townspeople as well as fellow-teachers.

The Teachers' Club of Montclair, New Jersey, may be cited as an instance of this type. The excellent character of the schools, both public and private, in this large suburban town has attracted a number of teachers from other localities. Many of

them, including men, married and single, have few social connections in the community. By a common impulse about two years ago, these teachers formed themselves into a club, obtained a club house, and through its means proceeded to satisfy their social and intellectual longings. The purposes of the club as stated are "to provide a common home for its members and to promote their social welfare." Membership is open to persons of either sex engaged in educational work in Montclair, including teachers in private schools. Wives or husbands of active members may be associate members. The usual social activities formal and informal take place, but in addition outside speakers have been invited, whose themes have been of a generally cultural character. The club has so far held no discussions, and has invited no speakers on educational topics. It is clear that an inclusive, united organization of this sort could promptly form plans looking to participation in school management should conviction of its need arise. It is equally clear that in so small a body of teachers in close communication with a liberal administration that need is not likely to be felt.

A tendency to aggregate in groups defined by rank or occupation is marked in the cities where teachers are counted by hundreds or thousands. In the earlier stages of the movement the majority of these associations asserted, and for the most part believed their main object to be professional stimulus and improvement. But with the growth of city school systems, entailing in administrative methods changes already discussed, the teachers' clubs feel the inevitable impulse toward assertion of interests related to the teachers' personal status and welfare. This impulse accounts for the formation of large, inclusive organizations.

On the other hand, with the increased emphasis laid on method and with the multiplication of "special" subjects, has come the tendency toward subdivision of the teacher-groups on the basis of rank, sex, special subjects or locality. A comparison of the lists of teachers' associations in our large cities throws suggestive light both on the similarities of impulse and the character of local lines of demarcation. The lists for St. Louis, Newark,

N. J., Boston and New York will be found in the Appendix.¹

It would be not only interesting but pertinent to discuss in detail the history and activities of several of these city clubs; limitations of space will, however, permit the selection of only a few as illustrating special types.

A Club Devoted both in name and in fact to Professional Interests is the Association of High School Teachers of English of New York City.—The study of this club makes it evident that even where the avowed object of an organization is “entirely professional,” its special questions may be treated in a broad and illuminating manner, sure to affect the general policy. The club numbers three hundred members, “but in addition,” writes the Secretary, “there were brought in to assist in special discussion last year forty teachers of English from the elementary schools, who were well represented in the eighty members making up our working committees. They did us good, and we did them good.” One of the topics of this joint discussion was the “Articulation of English between the Grammar and High School,” a theme constantly included among those questions of broader policy as yet unsatisfactorily determined by official regulation. This club is a notable exception which proves the rule laid down by a writer who asserts, “As yet the high schools, far from appreciating the problems of the elementary schools, scarcely know that such problems exist. They deal with their own pupils and courses as though the former had no past and the latter no foundations, seemingly oblivious to the fact that the problems of the high schools are bound up with those of the elementary schools and cannot be solved except as those of the primary and grammar schools are settled. The attitude and work of this club are rendering effective aid to the administration in relation to a difficult situation.

The influence of the larger organizations is occasionally greatly extended by the publication of a bulletin or news sheet, edited by the teachers. Some of these publications have gained a national reputation. A paper, for instance, is published by

¹ See Appendix B, pages 73 and 74.

The Pittsburgh Teachers' Association, which was organized in 1904 by a few advanced teachers. Its aims as defined in its constitution are "to promote the welfare of the common schools, and to improve the character of the work therein; to cultivate a spirit of sympathy and good will among the teachers, and to create in the community a deeper sense of the dignity of the teachers' profession and the importance of the aims they represent." The association has grown in numbers and now includes a large majority of the teachers. A few years ago, during a period when Pittsburgh school and civic conditions were chaotic and corrupt, these teachers held not only firmly but hopefully to the aims of their organization and by supporting the movement for an entire reorganization of the Pennsylvania school system, rendered remarkable service to their community. Their organ, the *Pittsburgh School Bulletin*, discussed in its lively and impartial pages the vices of the old "system," the virtue of some of its elements, the methods of reform, and the motives of the reform's opposers, always with as little acrimony as fear. At great personal risk, through a most trying period these teachers maintained both in their meetings and their press the rights of the children. Their firmness, patience, breadth of view and temperance of expression gave heart and inspiration to the efforts at reform. Their reward came in the revision of the state laws which delivered Pittsburgh from an outworn and corrupted school system. Under the new order they manifest the same spirit, one rare indeed among organizations of any sort. These Pittsburgh teachers have sufficient reason to work for their material interests, and do so when it is proper. But these have never been put first.

The Boston Teachers' Club is an association including about fifteen hundred women of all grades and ranks. The activities of the club center in a roomy club house on Beacon Hill; they are largely in line with those of other large clubs, social, cultural, recreational. Local and general school movements with a proper central regard to Boston are aptly presented in the *Boston Teachers' News Letter*, the official organ of the club; it strongly advocates, for instance, some form of teacher-participation in school planning. An important piece of legislative work

for which the Teachers' Club is largely responsible was the effort to establish a proper pension system for teachers, and to hold the pension fund intact and solvent.

This matter of pensions, still in a condition far from satisfactory, will continue to engage the active attention of teachers, not only in Boston. It is one of the material interests that has drawn into close connection large bodies of teachers.

Such a body, of which the avowed basis of organization is self-protection, is the *Boston Elementary Teachers' Club*, formed in 1910, at the beginning of the successful campaign for increased salaries for elementary teachers. It has been chiefly active in its efforts to protect its members in the matter of salaries and pensions; its legislative work to this end has been carried on with vigor, intelligence and skill, and has aroused a widespread support in the general community. The Club was responsible for securing, after a brilliant campaign, an increase of salary for elementary school teachers, and has also coöperated effectively with the *Boston Teachers' Club* in its campaign for the Teachers' Pension Bill. The Club has an Advisory Board composed of a representative from every school district in the city, which meets each month with the President. Its Conference Committee appears as occasion warrants before the School Committee, and defends its own requests or recommendations, which, if not always acceded to, are received with consideration.

The most notable example of a successful association formed on the basis of a material interest is the *Interborough Association of Women Teachers of New York City*. The history of this organization and its activities is now national property. Its one aim was the legal establishment of the "equal pay for equal work" principle in the New York School System. The former inequalities between the pay of men and women in the same positions are strikingly brought out by Miss Grace Strachan, District Superintendent in the Borough of Brooklyn in an address given before the National Education Association, 1913. Under the impetus of strong leadership the whole force of women employed by the New York Board of Education was united in this attempt, attaining their object only after long years of persistent effort. Unable to

convince the administration of the expediency of the measure, they finally and with success appealed to the Legislature at Albany. It is reported that the votes of certain members of the Legislature were secured by methods counted discreditable in any political activity, and surely not endorsed by the honorable leaders of the campaign. But it must be remembered that there were here 15,000 women fighting not indeed for bread, but for a share of the butter their brothers were able to enjoy. The success of the movement is still lamented by the New York School Administration since its effect was not only to raise the salaries of the women but to lower those of the men. Especially was the latter the case in the elementary schools, where the number of men teachers has been much reduced since the rule took effect. We can but speculate as to what would be the outcome were a question of this sort, involving the material interests of a large class of teachers, brought before a representative Teachers' Council. Would open discussion be blocked? Or would it be encouraged?

One important principle brought out by this campaign is the right of teachers' organizations to appear before the State Legislature by delegation or by counsel. The right has been exercised very recently by the *New York Principals' Association*, which has been at Albany opposing the bill for the establishment of a small Board of Education in New York City instead of the present one of forty-six members each representing a municipal district. The small Board movement is supported by eminent educators, but the principals uphold the present arrangement for reasons meditation makes clear. It seems probable that the New York Teachers' Council will hesitate to take up this question, as it will hesitate to touch some others of wide significance in the schools.

It is clear from these limited reviews of the different types of teachers' organizations that not one of them is without its potential part in the school administration and few without an actual influence. That influence is, however, at present spasmodic, sometimes ill or narrowly exercised, and seldom indeed based on instituted recognition from the authorities. Those authorities often claim that a lack of real interest in the larger questions of

school policy is proven by the character of teachers' clubs discussions. The contention is just, but were there a representative teacher body with a recognized function in the school system, those larger questions would become vitalized through the study and personal interest of the membership in the teachers' organizations. Indeed it seems certain that were means provided for the expression of teachers' views on school policy, fewer voluntary organizations would be formed on lines of class or material interest.

CHAPTER IV

FACTS AND FORECASTS

The close study and comparison of the forms of teacher-participation now instituted in various school systems of the United States make clear certain points.

1. The formation of teachers' councils, whether the body of teachers be large or small, is entirely feasible.

2. The method of formation must depend largely upon local conditions, but should be decided upon by mutual agreement between the administration and the teaching force.

3. In larger cities, such bodies to be effective should be a part of the school system and can be so only when their organization is authorized by the highest school authority, which properly retains the power of veto.

4. The questions considered by such councils may properly deal with any matter related to the curriculum or the internal administration of the schools; including the status and scale of salaries of the teachers, where these do not involve questions of appointment.

I. RISKS AND CONTINGENCIES IN INSTITUTIONED FORMS OF TEACHER-PARTICIPATION.

1. *EMPHASIZING DISSENSIONS AMONG THE TEACHING BODY.*

The fact that antagonisms exist between the "aggregated units" of the teaching force cannot be denied. In Portland, Oregon, as we have seen, these antagonisms were the bar to obtaining a common basis of agreement as to the representatives of each unit in an advisory body. It will have been noticed, too, that while the representatives of high schools have brought no factional disturbance into the New York Council, they strongly suspect that the opinions of their special group will not have fair influence there. It is evident that a much stronger sense

of solidarity must exist before the apprehension or the fact of group disagreement is eliminated. There are many who claim that the educational influence of Councils will gradually tone down jealousies of every sort. Ultimate harmony must depend upon the spirit of the teaching body as a whole, manifest in its power to sink minor differences for the sake of major advantages.

2. CREATING DIVISION OF AUTHORITY AND CONSEQUENT LOSS OF EFFECTIVENESS IN THE SCHOOL SYSTEM AS A WHOLE.

The existing Teachers' Councils have so far, though legally and efficiently constituted as deliberative and advisory bodies, no final authority. In fact they could not have it without legal enactment by the State or new provisions in city charters conferring upon them powers now possessed only by the Board of Education. Such power would in certain cases be likely to override that of the City Superintendent or the Board of Education. There can be found certain teachers who favor this arrangement; it will probably be long before their views are shared by the majority. But even with the present status it cannot be denied that a body reporting directly to the Board of Education and in no sense an adjunct of the Superintendent's office must have uncommon, almost unobtainable sagacity and self-restraint, if its recommendations do not at times clash with opinions of the Superintendent. If, as is highly possible, a difference of view becomes permanent the whole school system must suffer. That a good many city administrations apprehend this is a reason why more councils have not been established. As a cautious superintendent recently observed, "Councils might be a help if the teachers did not get to think they were the whole thing." When they do think this there must take place disturbances disastrous to the children's interest.

3. THE DOMINANCE OF A MAJORITY RULE PREJUDICIAL TO THE TRUER INTERESTS OF THE SCHOOLS AND THE COMMUNITY.

This danger, always to be reckoned with in bodies representing a large constituency, may be largely averted by a wise use of the committee system. It must, nevertheless, always be present until teachers as a class are characterized by a larger regard for the community interests as a whole. A large organization

composed almost entirely of teachers from resident families has great power to influence local opinion and legislation. A notable recent instance is the reactionary policy adopted by the Baltimore public school authorities; a policy practically dictated by a large teachers' association keenly alive to class interests.

The difficulty is summed up in an excerpt from a valuable book on various educational subjects by an eminent English educator. "Much is often said of the importance of an organization which will bring the collective opinion of the teaching body to bear on the solution of questions and enable educators as authorities to speak with one voice on points on which outside opinion has to be formed and general measures are contemplated. There may be times no doubt when such expressions of opinions are needed, but they are rare; and when they occur it will probably be found that unanimity of judgment is as little attainable within the precincts of the profession as without them and that it is by the utterances of a few of the wisest rather than by the resolutions of large bodies, that in the long run opinion is formed, great measures are initiated, and reforms are affected."¹

II. ADVANTAGES CLAIMED FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF COUNCILS.

1. COUNCILS FURNISH A MEDIUM OF EXPRESSION FOR THE WHOLE TEACHING BODY.

The Superintendent of the New York Schools in a recent interview announced that the total teaching and supervising force at the close of the year 1913-14 was 20,448, exclusive of teachers in evening schools, vacation schools, and playgrounds. Of this number, about 19,000 are principals and teachers; of these again, 87.4 per cent are women, 12.6 per cent men. This is the great constituency represented by the New York Teachers' Council. That it is on the whole adequately and fairly represented is due to the existence of voluntary teachers' organizations. The groups of which these are made up are drawn together by various impulses and incentives; usually the natural one of a common interest in a special branch of teaching or a special class of

¹ Sir Joshua Fitch, *Educational Aims and Methods*.

pupils. But whatever the basis of formation, each group has a member of the Teachers' Council whom it can regard as its representative. The several associations to which these council members belong have the opportunity in their own meetings of debating matters which have to do with group or common welfare; but their well-considered suggestions need no longer be given a mournful burial in the minutes of a special organization, since that organization's representative may be instructed to bring the matter before the Council where it receives more effective consideration, and may be carried up to the highest authority. The institution of "Group Councils" in Chicago, effects that same purpose for its 7,000 teachers. Teachers in these cities can no longer affirm, "There is no way for our convictions to gain a hearing."

2. COUNCILS ARE MODIFIERS OF EXTREME OPINIONS.

Discussion in an instituted council is not only stimulating to freedom of expression, it also modifies the pronouncements of extremists and faddists. Their ideas are no longer in danger of being endorsed "for peace's sake," since an organization will be reluctant to instruct its representative to present extreme views in the council.

No doubt foolish and unconsidered proposals will occasionally be made even in and by the dignified councils, since no group of mortals, even though instructors by profession, can be secure against erratic, short-visioned, or prejudiced proposals from its members. The committee system in New York is, however, a safeguard against such dangers. Indeed the record of the questions taken up in the first year's report of the New York Council is remarkable for the impression it gives of the dignity and value of its discussions, when one reflects that 20,000 teachers found here at last an open common for the explosion of the long smoldering bombs of suggestion. The Council is, therefore, the mouthpiece of the teaching body and gives them that voice in the educational counsels which many a thoughtful teacher has long envied when reading for instance the programs of the National Education Association.

3. *COUNCILS OFFER A SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL COURSE TO THEIR MEMBERS.*

“The training of teachers” is a topic which holds an inevitable place in every state and city school report, preëmpts many pages in the “proceedings” of conferences and conventions, and occupies the attention of whole faculties in Normal Colleges and Training Schools. Whatever be the result of all this effort so far as creating fitness to impart instruction is concerned, it must be conceded that teachers as a body are untrained in some directions seriously affecting their relations to their particular task, and discounting the influence upon the community which their position justifies that community to expect. Notwithstanding the many and conspicuous exceptions, it is acknowledged even by their own special advocates that “public school teachers do not know how to express themselves.”¹ Their outlook is too often narrow and prejudiced, a fact emphasized by state and city school officials, when they so frequently insist on some device that shall “broaden the outlook or remove the mental limitation of the average teacher.” Fine courses of lectures, excellent programs for clubs, conferences, and annual meetings are being operated, so to speak, all over this land with this end in view. But as it has been tersely put, “it is high time that it be universally recognized that teachers cannot be lectured or entertained into scholarship or professional power.”² A session or two as a member of a Council aware of its responsibility to a great body of constituents on the one hand, and its influence upon potential legislation or authoritative action on the other, will do more to develop the power to discriminate, to be judicial, to decide upon big questions with big results in mind, than any series of sittings to absorb cultural ideas.

But not only is the Council membership educated into larger views and greater conclusions, it gains also a closer knowledge of the practical side of many a school problem in regard to which teachers in despair or exasperation have exclaimed, “why not?” and “why?” For the first time they fully comprehend the technical or administrative difficulties of realizing propositions, at-

¹ Boston Teachers' News Letter.

² Lloyd Wolfe, former Superintendent of Schools, San Antonio, Texas.

tractive enough in theory, but bristling with thorns of difficulty when the plan for practical application must be made to suit thousands of teachers and tens of thousands of children. The delays and "red tape" incidental to centralized administration become less inexplicable as the Council membership is asked to propose how certain measures are to be put into actual operation.

"As an agency for the improvement of teachers in service the participation of teachers in the determination of educational policies should logically take high rank. It should furnish the motive for the efficient functioning of other agencies. A teacher who has the duty and privilege of suggesting and defending changes in the course of study and other educational policies would have a genuine motive for consulting school reports, and for reading educational literature. Furthermore, the exercise of initiative and the bearing of responsibility would give added dignity and attractiveness to the teachers' calling."¹

Surely the practice in discrimination between apparent and real significance in school problems, in balancing the relative values of suggested or of opposing policies, must supply new stimulus and create new efficiency in the council membership and by its reflected effects lift the ideals and enlighten the practice of the whole teaching force.

4. THE PRACTICAL BENEFIT OF COUNCILS TO THE ADMINISTRATION.

The questions which in theory and so far in practice are suitable for Council discussion are mainly those upon which the acting manager, in other words the Superintendent, requires guiding information. Councils should, as the most thoughtful educators conclude, rarely have dealings with the Board of Education. In an administration formed on the general plan now recognized as most fit and workable in large cities, namely, with a small Board concerned with the larger school policies and the business management, and a Superintendent fully empowered to deal with matters of internal administration, it is evident that the Council's natural connection is with the Superintendent and his assistants.

¹ Ruediger, *Agencies for the Improvement of Teachers in Service.*

“I intended,” says Superintendent Holmes of New Britain, “when the Council was organized that it should be an advisory body for the Superintendent, an adjunct of this office. It has been all that and more.” Councils in large cities do tend to be something more, but under the present methods of school government their main contribution to the administration will be that of expert advice.

APPENDIX A

REPORTS MADE BY THE NEW YORK TEACHERS' COUNCIL, 1914

1. Report of the Committee on Truancy and Delinquency; Cure for the Truant Problem.
2. Report of the Committee on Courses of Study. Results of the Trial Course in Arithmetic.
3. Report of the Committee on Professional Interests. A plan for the rating of high and training school teachers as a substitute for the rating known as "Superior Merit."
4. Report of the Committee on School Organization and Administration. Present plans for reducing part-time; its defects, if any and the changes which should be made.
5. Committee on School Records and Statistics. Suggestions for the reduction of clerical work in the schools and the improvement in forms, blanks, etc.

NOTE: Several of these have been printed as bulletins by the Board of Education.

APPENDIX B

TEACHERS' ASSOCIATIONS IN FOUR LARGE CITIES

Newark

St. Louis

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|---|---|
| 1. The Principals' Association. | The Principals' Club. |
| 2. The School Men's Club. | The Schoolmasters' Club. |
| 3. The Men High School Teachers' Association. | The Men's Club of High School Teachers. |
| 4. The Women High School Teachers' Association. | The Froebel Society. |
| 5. The Grammar Vice-Principals' Association. | The Society of Pedagogy. |
| 6. The Primary Vice-Principals' Association. | The Teachers' Fellowship Society. |
| 7. The Kindergarten Teachers' Association. | The Teachers' Mutual Aid Society. |
| 8. The Teachers' Guild. | The Teachers' Benevolent Annuity Association. |

APPENDIX B—*Continued**Boston*

1. Association of School Principals.
2. High School Masters' Club (Men).
3. School Men's Club.
4. High School Assistants' Association (Women).
5. Masters' Assistants' Club (Women).
6. Sub-masters' Club (Men).
7. Association of Teachers of Physical Education.
8. Manual Arts Club.
9. Sewing Teachers' Association.
10. Normal School Kindergarten Club.
11. Normal School Biological Club.
12. School Playground Association.
13. Public School Nurses' Association.
14. Boston Teachers' Club (Women).
15. Elementary Teachers' Club (Women).
16. Lady Teachers' Association (Sick Benefit).
17. Teachers' Mutual Benefit Association.
18. Boston Educational Society.¹
19. Club of First Assistants in Charge of Buildings.

The Masters' Association, the Headmasters' Association (high school principals), and the High School Councils are omitted as official, not voluntary organizations.

New York

1. High School Principals' Association.
2. Men Principals' Association, Manhattan and the Bronx.
3. Association of Women Principals of Public Schools in the City of New York.
4. High School Teachers' Association of New York City.
5. Male High School Teachers' Association of New York City.
6. Evening High School Teachers' Association.
7. Principals' Association of the City of New York.
8. Association of Assistants to Principals of New York City.
9. Association of Male First Assistants in High Schools of New York City.
10. Association of Men Teachers and Principals of the City of New York.
11. Association of Men Teachers in the Elementary Schools of the City of New York.
12. Women First Assistants' Club.

¹ Not composed wholly of teachers.

APPENDIX B—*Concluded*

13. Association of Elementary Teachers of Modern Languages.
14. New York Association of High School Teachers of German.
15. New York Association of Biology Teachers.
16. New York City Association of High School Teachers of English.
17. New York Public School Kindergarten Association.
18. Physical Training Teachers' Association of Greater New York.
19. Recreation Center Teachers' Association.
20. Association of Public School Teachers of Crippled Children in the City of New York.
21. Association of Supervisory Teachers of Drawing of Greater New York.
22. Association of Supervisory Teachers of Music.
23. Association of Teachers of Domestic Art.
24. Association of Model Teachers of the City of New York.
25. Teachers of Shopwork.
26. Brooklyn Principals' Association.
27. Brooklyn Teachers' Association.
28. Brooklyn Women Principals' Association.
29. Heads of Department Association of the Borough of Brooklyn.
30. Class Teachers' Organization of Brooklyn.
31. Men Teachers' Club of Staten Island.
32. Staten Island Women Teachers' Club.
33. Teachers' Association of the Borough of Queens.
34. Principals' Council of Queens.
35. Critic Teachers' Association.
36. Association of Men Teachers on the Eligible List prior to January 1, 1912.
37. Interborough Association of Women Teachers.
38. Elementary Class Teachers' Association of New York (1a to 6b).
39. Women Principals' Eligible List Association of the Public Schools of the City of New York.
40. Women's Educational Council.

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